Men-at-Arms

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World War II German Women's Auxiliary Services

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WORLD WAR II GERMAN WOMEN'S AUXILIARY SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

A wartime image showing a female auxiliary of the State Railways (Reichbahn). Such posters and other illustrations always showed the jobs as far more glamorous than they were in reality. (Otto Spronk)

AS A GENERAL RULE, during the greater part of the Third Reich period in Germany the employment of women in anything other than traditional roles (secretarial, clerical, etc.) was looked upon with a certain degree of disapproval. Hitler's very narrow-minded view of women saw their place as firmly in the home, caring for husband and children – in the latter case as many as possible, with official state decorations (the Mother's Cross or *Mutterkreuz*) instituted to reward women for producing as many babies as possible for the Fatherland. Hitler's strictly domestic view of the German woman's role in society naturally proved untenable; a wartime economy demanded ever more workers for the factories as able-bodied men were called up for military service at the front. Before long women were taking their place in what traditionally had been male occupations, at first in industry and then in uniformed services. Their new roles could be as varied as working as tramcar conductors, signals operators in the armed forces, or crewing searchlights in the anti-aircraft defences. There were even a few examples of women being awarded military decorations for bravery; but women in the Third Reich were never put in the position of serving at the front in a combat capacity, unlike their counterparts in the Soviet Union where women became fighter pilots, tank drivers and even snipers.[1]

Group of Army Signals Auxiliaries (Nachrichtenhelferinnen des Heeres) posed at their ease. Note the work smocks, with removable white collars, worn over the grey blouse, both garments with the Army style national eagle and swastika emblem on the right breast. See Plate B1. (Courtesy Brian L.Davis)

1 See Elite 90, *Heroines of the Soviet Union 1941–45*

Army Nachrichtenhelferin. The brooch worn on the tie is seen to good effect here. Note the piping in the front 'scallop' of the field cap flap, and the placement of the national emblem on the flap rather than the crown. Although the left sleeve with its rank insignia cannot be seen, under magnification the yellow piping to the cap seems to have a twisted cord effect, which would make her an Unterführerin under the 25 March 1942 regulations. (Otto Spronk)

MILITARY AUXILIARIES: ARMY & ARMED FORCES

Despite the fact that the use of female auxiliary staff by the Army had a long history dating back to the days before World War I, the order issued on 12 March 1937 for the mobilisation of the Army *(Heer)* made no provision for the resumed recruitment and employment of women. This was no doubt partly due to the belief that the principles of the Blitzkrieg would be vindicated, and any conflict would be of such short duration that the need for female auxiliaries would not arise. There is equally little doubt that the decision was also influenced by Hitler's very firm views on the place women should hold in German society.

It was after the successful conclusion of the campaign in the West, with France subjugated and more than half occupied, that the need for substantial numbers of additional personnel in the form of female auxiliaries became fully apparent. The administration of the occupied territories fell predominantly to the Army, and the need arose to fill huge numbers of clerical and administrative posts – positions that were considered perfectly suitable for women. The use of female auxiliaries in such posts would also release manpower for fighting units. Under the regulations of the day, such female staff would be considered as civil servants attached to the Army.

Accordingly, on 1 October 1940 the Corps of Female Signals Auxiliaries *(Nachrichtenhelferinnen)* was formed. This was to prove only the forerunner of a number of other female branches: the Corps of Welfare Auxiliaries *(Betreuungshelferinnen)* in 1941, the Corps of Female Staff Auxiliaries *(Stabshelferinnen)* and Economics Auxiliaries *(Wirtschaftshelferinnen)* in 1942, and even Female Horse-Breakers *(Bereiterinnen)* in 1943. Although a significant number of volunteers for such auxiliary service came forward, demand quickly outstripped supply. New laws were passed in December 1941 introducing the concept of compulsory military service *(Dienstverpflichtung)* for women between the ages of 18 and 40 years. These laws were never robustly enforced, however, probably once again under the influence of Hitler's negative views on women as soldiers. Finally, on 29 November 1944, the auxiliaries serving with all three branches of the Armed Forces *(Wehrmacht)* were combined into a single Corps of Female Auxiliaries *(Wehrmachthelferinnen)*.

Women in the German Army found themselves in a rather ambiguous situation. They were considered to be subject to the full range of military law and military discipline, yet did not have the legal status of soldiers. The Wehrmacht high command made it clear that as a matter of principle women should not be involved in fighting with firearms or serve in what might be considered 'combat' situations. This stand was in fact relaxed in certain cases: many women served in what might be termed a combat role in the anti-aircraft defences, and others served as signals staff with front line formations outside Germany. Women who wore military uniform were subsequently granted the legal status of combatants by an order of 28 August 1944.

Problems in maintaining sufficient supplies of uniforms for women auxiliaries resulted in 1942 in a decision that in general only women

serving as Armed Forces Auxiliaries outside the German Reich would wear uniform. Thereafter, women serving in Germany would wear not the uniform of the Wehrmacht but rather a protective smock or overall.

Iron Cross awards

A small number of female auxiliaries were decorated with the Iron Cross for bravery, usually relating to carrying out their duties under enemy fire, or helping to save wounded comrades, in the closing stages of the war. It is not known in which of the three branches of the Wehrmacht the following Stabshelferin and Nahchrichtenhelferin served: Stabshelferin Hildegard Wollny, Wehrmachthelferinnen Alice Bendig and Hildegard Bollgardt (March 1945); Nachrichtenhelferin Margarete Hirsekorn (April 1945). There is also a record of a *Freiwillige* or Volunteer named Leni Stalinek being decorated with the Iron Cross in March 1945, and another, Erika Stollberg, as late as May 1945. Again, details of their service are not known.

Taken in order of their formation, the following brief review of each of the branches explains their purpose and duties.

Army Signals Auxiliaries *(Nachrichtenhelferinnen des Heeres)*

Heeresmiteillungsblatt 40, No.1085, established the Auxiliary Signals branch on 1 October 1940. Throughout its brief history this branch was staffed by a mixture of transferees from other female organisations such as the Red Cross, by volunteers, and eventually by conscripts.

The basic unit for these auxiliaries was the Kameradschaft, comprising one supervisor (Oberhelferin) and up to 11 auxiliaries (Helferinnen). Anywhere from two to five of such Kameradschaften would form a Zug, a unit roughly equivalent to a platoon and commanded by a woman of leadership grade (Führerin). From two to four such Züge would be formed into a Bereitschaft (equivalent to a company), commanded by a senior leader (Oberführerin). Even the names for these auxiliary units owed more to the terminology of civil and political organisations of the Third Reich than to that of the Wehrmacht – yet further evidence of their somewhat ambiguous status in the eyes of the high command.

Signals Auxiliaries were trained at the Army signals school at Giessen by male regular Army signals personnel. The trained auxiliaries were then given duties as radio operators, telephonists, switchboard operators and secretarial workers within communications units. They would serve in the occupied territories primarily at higher level commands such as Corps or Army headquarters; or at general administrative centres of the Army. Many wartime photographs will be encountered showing both Army Nachrichtenhelferinnen and Navy Marinehelferinnen waiting, garlands of flowers in hand, to greet U-boat crews as they docked after particularly successful missions. These auxiliaries were also employed within the Reich where regular civil servant manpower

Army Stabsführerin, with gold collar and cap piping and a single gold chevron to each collar point; the signals 'Blitz' patch on her upper left sleeve is also edged in gold cord. In the background to the right stands Wolfgang Lüth, the U-boat ace who would eventually be awarded the Knight's Cross with Oakleaves, Swords and Diamonds. Cf Plate A2. (U-Boot Archiv)

Army signals auxiliaries in summer shirtsleeve order of white blouse with grey skirt and cap. Note the black tie with its enamelled 'Blitz' badge and the small 'Blitz' worn on the left side of the field cap. The national emblem, woven in white on black, is worn on the blouse. Note also the regulation issue handbag slung on its shoulder strap. (U-Boot Archiv)

was not available or suitable. On occasion Nachrichtenhelferrinen were also temporarily attached to other organisations such as Organisation Todt.

Uniforms

The basic service uniform of the Nachrichtenhelferin was a smart grey wool suit comprising skirt and tailored jacket, worn with a white blouse and black tie. Silk stockings and black lace-up shoes were worn, and a field cap completed the outfit. Auxiliaries were also provided with a leather handbag with a long shoulder strap.

Working smocks were also part of the regulation issue. A raincoat could also be worn in wet weather, and galoshes were also provided, while a greatcoat was issued for wear during cold weather. Additional items issued during the winter months included warm woollen underwear, woollen stockings and gloves, a scarf and ear muffs. In some areas ski trousers were worn as an alternative to the skirt, and fur waistcoats and mittens were used in extreme conditions.

Effectively, the uniform proper was used as walking-out dress, with the smock being worn for normal working duties. Women serving in occupied territories were forbidden to wear civilian clothing and fancy jewellery at any time, and only a minimal amount of make-up was permitted.

Uniform jacket The regulation jacket was double-breasted with two rows of two exposed buttons, the collar and lapels being relatively large. Two internally hung breast pockets were provided, with shallow-pointed external button-down flaps. On the right pocket flap was a machine-woven national emblem in white on a black background. Vertical slash waist pockets were closed by an exposed button in line with the lower front buttons. On each sleeve, some 4cm up from the cuff, was a button-down pointed tab, its end sewn into the front sleeve seam and the pointed end towards the rear.

On the upper left sleeve was a vertical oval dark blue-green patch, measuring c42mm x 56mm and bearing in its centre a lemon-yellow lightning bolt signals badge or 'Blitz'. This insignia gave these auxiliaries their common nickname of 'Blitzmädchen'. The sleeve insignia for leadership grades was edged with lemon-yellow cord.

At some time in 1944, presumably for economy reasons, a single-breasted variant jacket was introduced. The buttoned sleeve tabs were removed, and the pockets moved down to the jacket skirt, with non-buttoned flaps. Otherwise the new version was essentially similar to its predecessor.

Headgear The basic headgear worn by Signals Auxiliaries was a field cap (sidecap) similar to that worn by Army personnel, with a scalloped front cut-out to the flap or band. The crown and edge of the scalloped portion of the flap were piped in lemon-yellow. On the front of the flap, in the position where the cockade in national colours was normally worn

by the Armed Forces, the national emblem – the eagle and swastika – was displayed, machine-woven in white thread on a black backing. On the left side of the flap a smaller version of the sleeve Blitz insignia was worn in lemon-yellow on a dark green oval patch.

Blouses The regulation issue blouse was in grey, with a pointed collar which was worn fastened at the neck. A national emblem similar to that worn on the jacket was attached to the right breast. This grey blouse was sometimes replaced with a white version in the summer months and for walking-out dress.

Greatcoat The greatcoat was a double-breasted grey woollen garment fastened by two rows of four grey plastic buttons. It featured a long slash at the back from the waist to the hem, and had a woollen half-belt with a rectangular adjustment buckle. There were two large patch pockets at hip level with non-buttoned flaps. The signals Blitz insignia was sometimes, though not always, worn on the upper left sleeve.

Smocks These were made from lightweight cotton or similar fabrics, and were usually in light grey or occasionally light brown or fawn colour. The smock was fastened at the front by six plastic buttons, and was sometimes worn with a removable white collar liner. As often as not the smock was provided with two patch pockets at waist height. The standard national emblem was worn over the right breast, and the signals Blitz sometimes, but not always, on the left sleeve.

Summer wear A summer outfit was authorised, comprising a white light-weight skirt identical in cut to the regulation grey version, worn together with the white blouse as previously described. Short white ankle socks were worn with this order of dress, and occasionally white shoes, though black shoes were equally common. There was no special accompanying headgear, the normal grey field cap being worn with this clothing.

Ski trousers As an alternative to the skirt for cold weather outdoor duties, grey woollen ski trousers could be worn. These had slanted waist pockets and were worn with the legs bloused into standard issue Wehrmacht laced ankle boots.

Cravat brooches A circular metal brooch was worn pinned to the necktie by all ranks. It was enamelled black, with a yellow border and a yellow Blitz motif in the centre. For officer equivalents the brooch had a gold ornamental border in a geometric pattern.

Cuffbands Signals auxiliaries were authorised a special cuffband worn on the lower left sleeve of the uniform jacket; in yellow machine-woven fabric, it had black borders and the inscription *'NH des Heeres'* in black Gothic script. A further cuffband is also known, in black with silver-grey or aluminium Russia braid edges and hand-embroidered inscription *'Stab HSNH'*.

Army signals auxiliaries at a communications centre. Note that the uniform jacket was worn at all times, even indoors. Clearly visible is the cuffband *'NH des Heeres'* in black on yellow, just above the broad buttoning tab on the lower left sleeve. See Plate A1. (Josef Charita)

Signals auxiliary under instruction by an Army Signals branch NCO. The cuffband and the signals patch can both be seen on the left sleeve of her double-breasted grey service dress jacket. (Josef Charita)

Rank structure and insignia
(as introduced 4 March 1941)

Helferin	no insignia
Oberhelferin	yellow chevron, point down
Unterführerin	yellow chevron, two yellow pips placed vertically
Führerin	yellow cord around collar & as cap piping
Oberführerin	as above, but yellow/aluminium mixed cord
Hauptführerin	as above, but gold cord

(As amended 25 March 1942)

Helferin	no insignia
Vorhelferin	yellow embroidered pip on black disc patch
Oberhelferin	yellow chevron
Haupthelferin	yellow chevron, one yellow pip
Unterführerin	yellow chevron, two yellow pips placed vertically; yellow cord cap piping
Führerin	aluminium braid chevron on collar points; yellow/black mixed cord piping to collar, cap & edge Blitz insignia
Oberführerin	as above, but one aluminium pip within chevron; yellow/black/aluminium cord piping
Hauptführerin	as above, but two aluminium chevrons, one pip; aluminium cord piping
Stabsführerin	gold braid chevron, gold cord piping
Oberstabsführerin	gold braid chevron, one gold pip; gold cord piping

Signals auxiliaries from both the Army and Navy were often on hand to greet returning U-boat crews as they pulled into the quaysides of French Atlantic ports after successful patrols. Here an unidentified Korvettenkapitän is greeted with a bouquet of flowers and a welcoming embrace from an Army Oberhelferin, her rank indicated by the single chevron just visible on her left sleeve. (U-Boot Archiv)

Welfare Auxiliaries (*Betreuungshelferinnen*)

All matters relating to welfare in respect of German soldiers originally came under the auspices of the German Red Cross (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, DRK). In October 1941, however, all such personnel were transferred to the Corps of Welfare Auxiliaries which was under direct Army control. It is believed that these auxiliaries continued to wear the uniform of the Red Cross rather than any form of Army auxiliary uniform.

Staff Auxiliaries (*Stabshelferinnen*)

In February 1942 this new branch was created. Army Staff Auxiliaries were women between the ages of 18 and 40, who served as clerical workers in Army administration posts.

As previously mentioned, some of the early Signals Auxiliaries had served in clerical posts, but after the creation of the Stabshelferinnen these individuals were transferred to the new branch.

Staff auxiliaries were initially required to wear civilian clothing due to a shortage of uniforms, but in October 1943 a gradual issue of uniform began. These came from Signals Auxiliaries stocks, the only essential difference in appearance being the removal of the Blitz insignia.

A special cuffband was also introduced for the junior ranks. This was in green machine-woven artificial silk, with edging (woven to resemble twisted cord) and inscription in a pale grey-green: *'Stabshelferin/des Heeres'* in two lines of Gothic script. A further version for wear by leadership ranks bore the same wording, but woven in golden-yellow thread on a black band.

A special order of 16 September 1942 also introduced a separate corps of Staff Auxiliaries for the High Command of the Armed Forces (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht). These women, like the Army Staff Auxiliaries, initially wore civilian dress before being issued with surplus Signals Auxiliaries uniforms. They did not wear the cuffband described above. Instead they wore a special badge for civilians serving within the Army, which was basically a small aluminium national emblem. A total of five rank grades are known to have existed: Heimleiterin, Standortführerin, Bezirksführerin, Gebietsführerin and Hauptführerin.

The cuffbands worn by Army auxiliaries. Top to bottom: Signals Auxiliaries, black on yellow; Signals Staff Auxiliaries, aluminium on black; Staff Auxiliaries, and Economics Auxiliaries – both pale grey-green on green.

Economics Auxiliaries *(Wirtschaftshelferinnen)*

Little is known of this branch, but it is believed to have comprised unskilled workers such as cleaners, kitchen staff, etc. No special uniforms were used, civilian clothes or overalls being the order of the day. However, an identifying cuffband was introduced for wear on the sleeve of whatever dress was worn. This was the same format as that of the Staff Auxiliaries, but bore the inscription *'Wirtschaftshelferin/des Heeres'* in grey-green on a green band.

Horse breakers *(Bereiterinnen)*

Although the cavalry branch maintained its own remount and training facilities, there was a lack of qualified Army personnel to fulfil these duties for the other mounted branches, e.g. the artillery and supply units. Suitably qualified women, of all ages from their teens to middle aged, were first given the task of horse breaking at various equestrian training schools in 1943. All female personnel employed in such duties held the same basic rank of 'Auxiliary'. No rank insignia were worn, and the uniform was simply the basic late pattern single-breasted jacket with the regulation national emblem on the right breast as the only insignia. Headgear worn with this form of dress was normally a peaked field cap with button-fastened flap, similar to the Army's M43 field cap.

ARMED FORCES AUXILIARIES
(Wehrmachthelferinnen)

An order of 29 November 1944 united all female auxiliaries from the various branches of the armed forces into a single auxiliary corps; this marked Nazi Germany's final acceptance of women as an integral part of the armed forces, and their contribution to the concept of 'total war'. This step had been virtually forced upon the regime due to the huge demand for manpower to replace combat losses on all fronts.

The original uniforms as worn by the various branches continued to be used, but a unified rank structure and series of rank insignia were introduced to establish uniformity. Rank was now to be displayed by a series of 5mm and 10mm wide metallic braid cuff rings; aluminium braid was used by Army and Luftwaffe members and gold-coloured braid by Navy members. Leadership grades now wore silver cord piping to the collar and cap (gold for the Navy). The rank grades were as follows:

Helferin	no insignia
Oberhelferin	one 5mm cuff ring
Haupthelferin	two 5mm rings
Truppführerin	one 10mm ring
Obertruppführerin	two 10mm rings
Dienstführerin	two 10mm rings, above one 5mm looped ring
Oberdienstführerin	two 10mm above two 5mm rings, the lowest looped
Hauptdienstführerin	two 10mm above three 5mm rings, the lowest looped
Stabsführerin	three 10mm rings above one looped 5mm ring
Oberstabsführerin	three 10mm rings above two 5mm rings, the lowest looped

Numerous further orders were issued in the closing days of the war, e.g. the order of 16 April 1945 which reclassified all women employed within the field army as *Wehrmachthelferinnen-Heer*; but given the chaotic circumstances which prevailed it is unlikely that these were ever

A mixed group of Army and Navy signals auxiliaries greeting a U-boat crew. Note the two Marinehelferinnen at right: both have leadership grade yellow/black cap piping and, unusually, both wear the national emblem on the crown of the cap rather than the flap, like the Army auxiliary to the left – Navy auxiliaries were brought into line with this more usual practice from May 1944. The central woman has the single collar pips of Marineober- führerin. Also of considerable interest is the *'Marinehelferin'* cuffband (without braid edging) worn by the woman at right, just below the trade badge of a radio operator. (U-Boot Archiv)

anything but paper exercises. This final order grouped all auxiliaries into three categories: Staff Auxiliaries, Signals Auxiliaries and the remainder generally classified as Troop Auxiliaries. The order also introduced a new *'Wehrmachthelferin-Heer'* cuffband to replace all previous bands; but it is unlikely that this was ever manufactured, let alone issued.

NAVY

The German *Kriegsmarine*, like the Army, had a long history of employing female auxiliary staff. Since the Kaiser's day these women had been employed predominantly in what were seen as traditionally suitable roles – as clerical staff, cleaners, kitchen workers, etc. As with the Army, the general mobilisation order of November 1938 for the Navy did not foresee any particularly significant role for women in the Kriegsmarine. With the outbreak of war the need to release male personnel for front line service meant that women gradually began to fill suitable posts, often in very similar jobs to those held by women serving with the Army.

The first major use of female personnel on specifically military duties by the Navy began on 10 April 1941 with the formation of the Aircraft Reporting Auxiliaries (Flugmeldehelferinnen der Kriegsmarine). In mid-1942 a further predominantly female branch was formed as the Naval Auxiliaries (Marinehelferinnen); and in 1943 the Navy formed its own corps of Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries (Marine Flakhelferinnen).

As noted above, the female auxiliaries from all three services were combined to form the Wehrmachthelferinnenkorps in 1944.

A fine portrait study of a naval auxiliary with the rank of Marineführerin, indicated by the absence of collar insignia but the yellow/black twist effect cord piping on her cap, jacket collar and blouse collar. Also of note is the leadership grade brooch worn on her necktie, with its wider decorated gold edging. This is the service dress of September 1943 regulations, a grey jacket and skirt worn with the dark blue naval sidecap. (Otto Spronk)

Aircraft Reporting Auxiliaries of the Navy *(Flugmeldehelferinnen der Kriegsmarine)*

This branch, formed on 10 April 1941, was created by the simple expedient of absorbing members of the former Female Aircraft Reporting Service (weibliche Flugmeldedienst-personal) into the Navy. Although the rank insignia were modified at this time, and the auxiliaries themselves were under Navy control, the basic uniform that was worn continued to be of *Luftwaffe* style, and is dealt with in detail in the Air Force section below.

Naval Auxiliaries *(Marinehelferinnen)*

Regulations for the specific use of female auxiliaries within the Kriegsmarine were first published on 7 July 1942. Both prior to and after this date, female auxiliaries employed on signals and communications work were supplied by the

The brooch for lower grades of naval auxiliary, lacking the decorative gold border of Marineführerin and upwards; and the *'Marinehelferin'* cuffband in golden-yellow on navy blue. This was made both with and without yellow braid edging.

Army. The fact that they were actually employed by the Navy was indicated by simply adding the term 'Navy' to the end of the title. These auxiliaries thus became known by the rather bizarre title of 'Army Signals Auxiliaries (Navy)', Heeresnachrichtenhelferinnen (Marine).

Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries *(Flakhelferinnen)*

Formed in 1943, this branch provided female helpers to assist in crewing searchlight units, barrage balloons, etc., which were usually located with or close to the actual anti-aircraft artillery. The female auxiliaries were not permitted to crew the weapons themselves, at least initially.

In 1943 the new force of naval auxiliaries were divided into two categories: Staff Auxiliaries (Stabshelferinnen) and Troop Auxiliaries (Truppenhelferinnen), with duties as follows:

Stabshelferinnen

Serving with the staff of high level commands
Serving with HQ staffs of the naval shore artillery
Serving at naval schools and training units
All other non-specific auxiliary duties

Truppenhelferinnen

Serving with coastal defence and air defence units
Serving with land-based headquarters
Serving during training on specialist equipment
Serving with auxiliary replacement units

At the same date in 1943, all other female auxiliaries serving with the Navy, including the Aircraft Reporting Service and anti-aircraft auxiliaries, were absorbed into this general corps of female personnel.

Uniforms

As already noted, many female auxiliaries serving in the Navy actually wore Luftwaffe pattern uniforms, and even after the introduction of the Marinehelferinnen in July 1942 naval uniforms were unavailable. This shortage of uniforms led to regulation field-grey Navy uniforms intended for male personnel also being issued to female auxiliaries.

Finally, from January 1943, female naval auxiliaries began to receive a specific uniform. The basic service dress consisted of a single-breasted tailored jacket, long trousers, blouse and peaked field cap, and was worn with either shoes or ankle boots. A greatcoat, gloves, woollen socks and pullover completed the basic issue. However, exact details of these intended uniform garments are unknown, since photographic evidence seems to show predominantly the adapted male field-grey uniform being worn.

In September 1943 a new female uniform was introduced which, with the exception of the cap, was in the standard grey as used by the Army's women auxiliaries. Its basic components were as follows:

Uniform jacket A single-breasted garment fastened by three dark grey plastic buttons. Two internal pockets were provided, with external non-buttoned flaps. A cloth waistbelt passed through a loop at either

side seam; later models of the jacket lacked the belt and belt loops. The design of the jacket was almost identical to that of the blue-grey Luftwaffe style garment used by the Aircraft Reporting Service auxiliaries. A naval style national emblem, in machine-woven yellow thread on dark blue, was worn over the right breast.

It was also not uncommon for stocks of surplus Army issue grey jackets, often of the older double-breasted pattern, to be issued to naval auxiliaries.

Skirt A grey skirt, once again identical in all but its colour to that used with the blue-grey Luftwaffe style uniform.

Blouses A light blue long-sleeved blouse with buttoned cuffs, worn fastened at the neck. Examples were made both with and without breast pockets. If made with pockets, a machine-woven national emblem in yellow on blue was worn above the right pocket. A white short-sleeved blouse was also occasionally used in summer months. There is photographic evidence for the wearing of piping round the blouse collar by leadership grades who wore it on the jacket and cap.

Naval field cap To identify themselves as belonging to the Kriegsmarine, many female auxiliaries wore a dark blue woollen cap identical to the so-called *Bordmütze* field cap worn by sailors. It initially had the national emblem fixed to the front of the crown as normal, and the position at the front of the flap where the national cockade would be worn was left bare. In May 1944, however, the national emblem was moved down to the front of the flap. Leadership grades wore yellow/black cord, or gold piping, to the top edge of the flap.

Smocks A double-breasted smock type work dress was issued, in a shiny blue or grey material, with the naval national emblem sewn over the right breast. The smock could be either buttoned at the front, or tied with a waistbelt. Leadership grades had golden-yellow cord piping to the collar.

In 1944 a practical dark blue working dress was introduced. This consisted of:

Field cap This was based on the M43 Einheitsfeldmütze design, but without the turn-down side and neck flaps. The naval pattern machine-woven national emblem was worn on the front of the crown, but not the national cockade.

M44 pattern jacket A standard short 'battledress blouse' style jacket was introduced for all female auxiliaries. Closely resembling the M44 waist-length jacket used by the Army, this was single-breasted and fastened by six buttons; it was intended to be worn fastened at the neck. It was provided with two patch breast pockets with button-down flaps, and the sleeves had buttoned wrist bands. A machine-embroidered national emblem in golden-yellow cotton on a dark blue base was worn over the right breast pocket of the naval version.

Skirt This had two front pleats, fastened with four buttons at the right hip, and had two internal front hip pockets with slanted buttoned external flaps.

The exact identity of this auxiliary is uncertain. Since the cap seems to be the dark blue Bordmütze she is probably a Marinehelferin; but note that the cap is standard male issue, with both national emblem and cockade displayed. The jacket has shoulder straps and high-cut lapels, which suggest a male issue M44 waist length 'battledress' type – perhaps in field-grey for naval ground troops? Just visible on the sleeve is what looks like the single straight yellow braid stripe of a Marinevorhelferin; but the plain collar patches, reminiscent of the cornflower-blue patches worn by sailors on the naval pea-jacket, are a mystery. All in all, this photo is an excellent reminder that female auxiliaries' uniforms sometimes showed even less meticulous adherence to regulations than those of servicemen. (Otto Spronk)

The auxiliary shown here is actually a naval Helferin, despite wearing a grey rather than dark blue field cap (again, complete with non-regulation national cockade). Note also the roll-neck pullover worn rather than a blouse; this, and the use of trousers rather than a skirt, suggests winter time. This shot gives an excellent overall view of the auxiliaries' single-breasted grey jacket which was the norm from 1944.

RIGHT **This Marinehelferin wears a working overall in a shiny grey fabric, and with the national emblem in yellow on a dark blue background. Such overalls were usually worn buttoned up to the neck. (Robert Noss)**

Ski trousers Ski trousers, probably identical in design to those described above in the Army section, were also issued to naval auxiliaries.

Rank structure and insignia

Marinehelferin	no insignia except regulation brooch
Marinevorhelferin	yellow braid sleeve bar 8cm x 4mm
Marineoberhelferin	two bars
Marinehaupthelferin	three bars
Marineführerin	leadership grade brooch, yellow/black cord collar & cap edging
Marineoberführerin	as above, plus pip on each collar
Marinehauptführerin	two pips on each collar
Marinestabsführerin	one pip; gold collar & cap cord
Marinestabsoberführerin	as above, but two pips

Cuffband A cuffband was introduced for wear by female naval auxiliaries. In dark blue cloth, it was 3.5cm wide and bore the inscription *'Marinehelferin'* machine-woven or machine-embroidered in golden-yellow Gothic script. It was usually, but not always, edged with golden-yellow braid. The cuffband was worn on the lower left sleeve of the jacket and greatcoat. Photographic evidence of this band actually being worn is rather scarce, suggesting that the scale of issue may have been somewhat limited.

Brooch On completion of their training, naval female auxiliaries would attend a small ceremony at which they would be awarded a brooch to signify their status as fully trained personnel. It was circular, about 3cm in diameter, with a dark blue field and yellow-gold border, and bore in the centre the traditional naval fouled anchor motif. Leadership grades wore a similar brooch, but with a wider edging with an elaborate geometrical pattern.

On the creation of the unified Wehrmachthelferinnen in November 1944, those auxiliaries serving with the Navy were to adopt the same ranks and rank insignia as described in the Army section above except that the sleeve rings were to be made from gold- rather than silver-coloured braid. A new cuffband was to be introduced, bearing the inscription *'Wehrmachthelferin-Marine'*. There is no evidence to suggest that this band was ever manufactured.

An auxiliary from the Aircraft Reporting Service (Flugmeldedienst). The uniform is the same as that worn by other Luftwaffe auxiliaries, but just visible on the lapel is the circular enamelled badge with the silhouette of an aircraft, as worn by this specific branch. (Otto Spronk)

AIR FORCE

As the Luftwaffe was a new creation and a child of Nazi Germany, there was no precedence for the employment of female personnel; but in fact women served with the Luftwaffe from its inception. Initially employed in the traditional roles of clerical workers, telephonists, canteen and kitchen staff, cleaners, etc., they gradually took over more important posts. While the Luftwaffe mobilisation orders in 1938 did not envisage this development, the wartime Air Force recruited women between the ages of 17 and 45 in considerable numbers. Female auxiliaries served in the following categories:
Auxiliary Aircraft Reporting Service
Air Signals Auxiliaries
Air Raid Warning Service Auxiliaries
Staff Auxiliaries
Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries

Like the auxiliaries serving with the Army and Navy, Air Force female personnel were absorbed into the tri-service Wehrmachthelferinnen in November 1944; and like them, too, they found that the change had little practical effect in view of the late date of this reorganisation.

Auxiliary Aircraft Reporting Service *(Flugmeldedienst)*

Female auxiliaries serving in this branch crewed the various radar stations, listening posts and reporting stations. It was an independent branch until the formation of the Luftnachrichtenhelferinnen, into which it was absorbed in February 1941.

Flugmeldedienst personnel were first granted their own uniform in June 1940. It consisted of a jacket, skirt, blouse and cap, which had to be paid for from the auxiliary's own civilian clothing ration coupons.

Uniform jacket A single-breasted garment tailored in blue-grey wool, with three large plastic buttons. It had two internally hung skirt pockets with rectangular non-buttoned external flaps. A cloth waist belt, held in place by a loop at each side of the waist, was provided on early jackets but later deleted. A Luftwaffe style 'flying' national eagle and swastika emblem, machine-embroidered in silver-grey thread on grey-blue, was worn above the right breast.
Skirt The skirt was cut from blue-grey wool, with two front pleats, and a zip fastening on the right seam.
Blouses The blouse was made from light blue cotton with long sleeves which ended in buttoned cuffs. The collar was worn buttoned up to the neck and with a black male type necktie. Although the blouse was, by

A Luftwaffe recruiting poster, bearing the slogan 'Help us Win as an Air Signals Auxiliary'.

regulation, worn without a national emblem, this was not infrequently seen (as was also the case among Army and Navy auxiliaries). For summer 'shirtsleeve order' both long- and short-sleeved white blouses were often worn.

Field cap Women auxiliaries wore a cap very similar to the Luftwaffe's *Fliegermütze* sidecap. It differed principally in the omission of the national cockade from the front of the flap; the national emblem was displayed on the front of the crown. From November 1940, golden-brown piping – the branch colour of Luftwaffe signals personnel – was worn around the edge of the flap.

Greatcoat The greatcoat issued to female auxiliaries was similar to the male version but was not quite so long, coming to just below knee level. It was double-breasted and cut from fine blue-grey wool, being fastened by two rows of four dark grey plastic buttons. An adjusting half-belt was fitted to the rear, which had a central slash reaching from just below waist height down to the hem. Two internal pockets, with external non-buttoned slanted flaps, were provided at waist height.

Smocks A single-breasted work smock cut from lightweight pale blue-grey or greyish-brown cotton was issued to female personnel. It was fastened by anything from four to six buttons at the front. It was provided with a half-belt at the rear and often had two flapless patch pockets applied to the sides. A white collar liner was also often worn. The national emblem was not supposed to be worn on this garment.

Rank structure and insignia (post August 1940)

Anwärterin	no insignia
Flugmeldhelferin	horizontal silver braid bar, 7cm x 1cm
Aufsichthelferin	as above, with embroidered pip above
Betriebsgruppenunterführerin	as above, but two pips
Betriebsgruppenführerin	as above, but three pips

A further amendment in **July 1941** brought the rank structure into line with other auxiliary branches; all ranks were prefixed Ln.Flum. (for Luftnachrichten-Flugmeldedienst). The new rank insignia were worn, like the old, on the upper left sleeve:

Anwärterin	no insignia
Helferin	silver chevron
Oberhelferin	two chevrons
Haupthelferin	three chevrons
Führerin	one looped chevron
Oberführerin	two chevrons, the lowest looped
Hauptführerin	three chevrons, the lowest looped
Stabsführerin	four chevrons, the lowest looped

Above these insignia on the jacket and greatcoat was worn a small blue-grey cloth disc embroidered with two crossed lightning bolts with a single superimposed wing in the centre. A subsequent amendment

in November 1942 saw a silver-grey cord edging added to this patch for fully trained personnel.

Unlike auxiliaries serving with the Army and Navy, personnel of the Flugmeldedienst did not wear a regulation brooch. However, a special lapel badge was authorised for wear on civilian clothes, and photographic evidence shows that this was occasionally worn pinned to the uniform necktie in the same way as Army and Navy auxiliaries wore their brooches.

Two types of badge are known. The first pattern shows the outline of an aircraft over a light blue central field with radial lines. Above the aircraft was the word *'REICHS'* and below it *'LUFT-SCHUTZ';* to the right of the aircraft was a swastika banner, and to the left a red-white-black tricolour banner. The second pattern has a light blue field with radial lines, in the centre of which is a black aircraft. The lower part of the badge had a red field with white disc and black swastika.

This Air Signals Auxiliary (Luftnachrichtenhelferin) is wearing the woollen greatcoat; her field cap bears the copper-brown piping of the signals branch around the flap, and on her necktie is the so-called 'civil badge', a small stickpin version of the Luftwaffe's unique 'flying' style national emblem. Interestingly, her blouse is in striped material. (Otto Spronk)

Air Signals Auxiliaries (*Luftnachrichtenhelferinnen*)

This branch was established in February 1941 and on its inception it absorbed the Flugmeldedienst. These women were employed in communications centres as telephonists, radio operators, cipher personnel, teletype and teleprinter operators. The basic range of uniform items worn by the new branch was the same as that worn by the Flugmeldedienst, but with the new range of rank insignia introduced in July 1941, as listed above.

In addition to these chevrons worn on the upper left sleeve, leadership ranks (Führerin and above) wore an embroidered silver pip on the points of the collar and, from October 1943, silver cord edging to the collar.

The insignia were changed once again in **June 1944**, and the standard 5mm wide braid used in the above series was replaced by a combination of 5mm and 10mm braids. The new ranks were are follows:

Anwärterin	no insignia
Helferin	5mm chevron
Oberhelferin	two 5mm chevrons
Haupthelferin	one 10mm over one 5mm chevron
Führerin	two 10mm chevrons over looped 5mm chevron
Oberführerin	two 10mm over two 5mm chevrons, the lowest looped
Hauptführerin	two 10mm over three 5mm chevrons, the lowest looped
Stabsführerin	three 10mm over one looped 5mm chevron
Oberstabsführerin	three 10mm over two 5mm chevrons, the lowest looped

Leadership grades wore an embroidered silver pip on the points of the collar, and silver cord piping to the collar and cap.

In addition to these rank insignia, 5mm braid rings worn on both cuffs were used to denote positions of authority, somewhat analogous to the sleeve stripes worn by company first sergeants in the Armed Forces. Those holding the post equivalent to a platoon leader wore single cuff rings, while those equivalent to company commanders wore double rings.

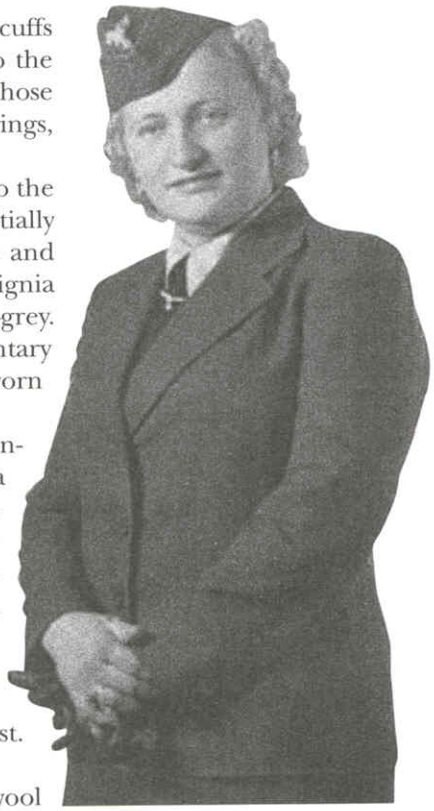
Just above the sleeve rank chevrons was worn a badge equating to the trade specialist badges worn by members of the Armed Forces. Initially a single lightning Blitz was worn, similar to that worn by Army and Navy signals auxiliaries. In June 1942 a wider range of such insignia were introduced, all embroidered in silver-grey thread on blue-grey. These insignia are illustrated on Plate H as H36-44 (see commentary on page 47). All these specialist badges were identical to those worn by male personnel.

Brooch A brooch was also introduced for Luftnachrichtenhelferinnen. It comprised a Luftwaffe style flying eagle over a circular ring; to the left of the eagle was the letter 'L' and to the right the letter 'H'. This was to be worn on the left lapel of the uniform jacket and also of civilian clothing. The brooch was ultimately replaced with the so-called 'civil insignia' of the Luftwaffe, which was simply a small stickpin showing the Luftwaffe eagle.

* * *

Over time, several new items of clothing were introduced to supplement the original uniform inherited from the Flugmeldedienst. These included:

Headgear A peaked field cap similar to the M43 style blue-grey wool field cap worn by male personnel. The principal difference was that the female auxiliary version almost invariably used a single button fastening to the front flap (male versions used both single and double button fastening); and the only insignia normally used was the Luftwaffe version of the national emblem, the national cockade usually being omitted.



A Luftwaffe Helferin in the grey-blue woollen single-breasted service jacket. (Robert Noss)

Jackets:

Fliegerbluse This was in fact a standard issue Luftwaffe male garment, but photographs show that it was occasionally issued to women, no doubt due to shortages of auxiliaries' uniforms. It was a plain single-breasted jacket with a fly front concealing the buttons, and had two internal waist pockets with external flaps.

Hip-length jacket This was a specifically female garment, cut from blue-grey wool. It was single-breasted with a fly front, and could be fastened at the neck with a hook-and-eye. It featured a cloth waist belt passing through a loop at each side seam and buckling at the front. The Luftwaffe national emblem was worn over the right breast. Two internal pockets were provided in the jacket skirts, with external buttoned flaps.

M44 style jacket This was a short 'battledress blouse' style closely resembling the M44 waist-length jacket used by the Army. It was single-breasted, fastened by six pebbled aluminium buttons and intended to be worn fastened at the neck. It was provided with two patch breast pockets with buttoned flaps. The sleeves had buttoned adjusting tabs on the cuffs.

Ski trousers These were as previously described in the Army section, but cut from blue-grey wool.

This auxiliary wears the single 5mm rank chevron of a Helferin (1941 regulations), and the trade patch of an aircraft reporting specialist – the separate Air Reporting Service was absorbed into the general auxiliary service from February 1941. Cf Plate C1. (Robert Noss)

Air Raid Warning Service *(Luftschutz Warndienst Helferinnen)*

Auxiliaries of the air raid warning service wore the same uniforms as other Luftwaffe auxiliaries, but with their own special insignia. The rank structure was as below; all rank insignia were worn on the lower left sleeve. All Air Raid Warning Service ranks were prefixed LS-Warndienst.

Helferin	horizontal braid bar, 7cm x 5mm, below centred embroidered pip
Oberhelferin	as above, but two pips
Haupthelferin	as above, but three pips
Führerin	braid ring around sleeve below embroidered pip
Oberführerin	as above, but two pips

Green cord piping edged the flap of the cap. In place of the Luftwaffe national emblem the Luftschutz Warndienst had their own insignia: a wreath of oakleaves with wings emerging from each side, in the centre of the wreath a 'mobile' swastika below a scroll bearing the word *'LUFTSCHUTZ'*. This insignia was worn over the right breast and also on the cap. From April 1942 an embroidered patch was introduced to be worn on the upper left sleeve. This showed two crossed lightning bolts with arrowheads at each end, below the letters 'LSW'; the patch was in green wool with the design executed in silver-grey thread. Until this insignia became available, auxiliaries wore a white armband with the inscription *'Luftschutz'* printed in black. In June 1944, a grey cord edging was added to the sleeve patch for fully trained personnel.

LS-Warndienst auxiliaries could also wear cuff rings as described above, to indicate a specific position of authority held. In this case a single ring on each sleeve signified those in charge of an operations group, and two rings those in charge of a platoon-sized unit.

Staff Auxiliaries *(Stabshelferinnnen)*

Staff auxiliaries of the Luftwaffe wore exactly the same range of uniform items as their predecessors of the Aircraft Reporting and Signals Auxiliaries. The only specific item which identified these women was a diamond-shaped blue-grey cloth patch worn on the upper left sleeve; this had a silver-grey border, and in the centre the inscription *'Stabs/ Helferin'* in two lines above a Luftwaffe-style national emblem.

Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries *(Flakhelferinnen)*

Although Flak Auxiliaries had been employed by the Luftwaffe for some time (usually volunteers supplied by the Labour Corps), it was not until October 1943 that such a branch was officially constituted; at that date all existing volunteers were absorbed into it. Like their naval counterparts, their primary function was to crew searchlights, barrage balloons and fire control equipment. In the closing months of the

OPPOSITE **Luftwaffe Nachrichtenhelferin showing the blue-grey jacket and piped field cap to good advantage; the standard male issue Luftwaffe eagle and swastika national emblem is worn in both positions. (Robert Noss)**

Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries (Flakhelferinnen) manning a searchlight battery in 1944. They wear the M43 Einheitsfeldmütze peaked field cap, the 'hip-length' jacket with integral cloth waist belt, and ski trousers tucked into rolled socks and male issue ankle boots. See Plate C2. (Courtesy Brian L.Davis)

war their use in actual gun crews was authorised. Once again, existing uniform items as used by other Luftwaffe auxiliary branches were issued. The basic rank structure was as follows, all ranks being prefixed Flakw. (for Flakwaffen):

Helferin	5mm braid chevron
Oberhelferin	two chevrons
Truppführerin	one 10mm over one 5mm chevron
Obertrupp-führerin	one 10mm over two 5mm chevron
Führerin	two 10mm over one looped 5mm chevron
Oberführerin	two 10mm over two 5mm chevrons, the lowest looped
Hauptführerin	two 10mm over three 5mm chevrons, the lowest looped
Stabsführerin	three 10mm over one looped 5mm chevron
Oberstabsführerin	three 10mm over two 5mm chevrons, the lowest looped

On the upper right sleeve was worn a blue-grey shield patch bearing a Luftwaffe national emblem superimposed over a downward pointing sword. Standard Luftwaffe trade specialist badges were worn on the upper left sleeve.

Auxiliaries who had not yet been issued with a uniform could wear civilian clothes with an armband in white bearing the same insignia as the right sleeve patch but printed in black or embroidered in black thread.

When the unified Wehrmachthelferinnen service was established in November 1944, those serving with the Luftwaffe were termed Wehrmachthelferrinnen-Luftwaffe. Although an overall commander of

Civilian auxiliaries serving with the Air Raid Protection service (Reichsluftschutzbund, RLB). They have been issued with simple one-piece 'boiler suit' type overalls without insignia, gas masks, and steel helmets identical to those worn by their male colleagues, with a decal of the RLB winged badge on the front. Such unflattering attire was far more common among most female auxiliaries than the elegant uniforms shown on recruiting posters. (Robert Noss)

The insignia of the Air Raid Warning Service (Luftschutzwarndienst). The machine-woven insignia of the RLB was worn on the field cap and right breast. The 'LSW' patch, embroidered in silver-grey on dark green, was worn on the left sleeve.

Luftwaffe auxiliaries was created in March 1945 on the formation of the Helferinnenkorps der Luftwaffe, with the title of Generalführerin des Luftwaffenhelferinnenkorps (as well as a deputy for this rank), it is thought unlikely that any special insignia could have been manufactured before the end of the war. Thus the only insignia known would have resembled that described in the Army section for the Wehrmachthelferinnen-Heer.

* * *

In general terms, period photographs of auxiliaries from all branches of the Armed Forces often show non-regulation garments being worn, in particular protective clothing such as one-piece 'boiler suit' coveralls. The information provided above should be taken only as a guide to regulation uniforms and insignia. Readers may also encounter other photographs that show male uniform or working clothing, which was frequently issued where the official female garments were unavailable.

In the occupied territories, especially on the Eastern Front, numbers of local volunteers were used. These Hilfswillige or *'Hiwis'* were often issued whatever clothing was to hand from local sources, and their status was identified only by the wearing of an armband – usually the official *'Im Dienst der Deutschen Wehrmacht'* type. In addition, some female volunteers from the Eastern occupied territories serving in the Flak Auxiliaries are known to have worn armbands or sleeve patches in their own national colours. These insignia were initially introduced for wear by male volunteers from these countries, but photographic evidence confirms that they were also adopted by women.

CIVIL & POLITICAL AUXILIARIES

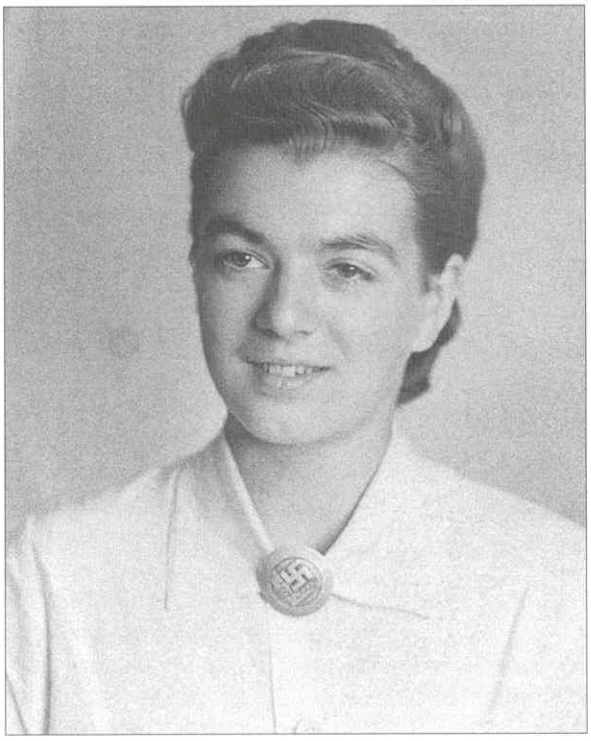
STATE LABOUR CORPS
(Reichsarbeitsdienst)

The women's branch of the Labour Corps evolved from the earlier Voluntary Labour Service (Freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst, FAD) which had its own female section, the Freiwilliger Frauenarbeitsdienst or Voluntary Women's Labour Service.

Labour service moved from a voluntary to a compulsory basis following a law of 26 June 1935, which decreed that all young Germans of both sexes would be obliged to serve in the Reichsarbeitsdienst. It was not until September 1939, however, that this law was universally enforced. Although the Nazi view of the woman's place centred on domesticity, female RAD members were also employed on farms and for community services such as caring for the elderly and for children. Generally speaking the women's branch of the RAD was not a highly disciplined organisation, being fairly relaxed and sociable. A full-time career as a permanent member of the RAD was also open to young women.

The first major change came in 1941 when a Führer Decree introduced the concept of Auxiliary War Service (Kriegshilfdienst) for RAD women. In many cases this service was restricted to serving as factory workers in firms whose business was contributing to the war effort (munitions factories, etc.), or serving in essential civilian jobs such as

auxiliary hospital staff, postal workers, bus or tramcar conductresses, railway workers and so forth. Many volunteered to serve with the Aircraft Reporting Service of the Luftwaffe, described above, and many others were drafted into the Luftwaffe as Flakhelferinnen. There is a record of a RAD-Bezirksführerin by the name of Dr Lemke being awarded the Iron Cross in April 1945, but details of her unit or the action for which she was decorated are not known at this time.



A RADwJ auxiliary of the State Labour Service Female Youth organisation in summer shirt-sleeve order. Note the brooch worn at the throat. For the RADwJ this was a badge of rank: here, the iron-coloured version with a plain border indicates the lowest rank, Arbeitsmaid. See Plate H25–27. (Otto Spronk)

OPPOSITE ABOVE **The formal service uniform of the RADwJ included a brown jacket with contrasting dark brown collar, and a brown felt fedora hat. Just visible on the left sleeve is a shield-shaped RAD district patch. Once again, the rank here is Arbeitsmaid. See Plate F2. (Otto Spronk)**

OPPOSITE **A member of the RADwJ on war service duties, acting as a tramcar conductor to release a man for military service. Note the cuffband *'RAD Kriegshilfdienst'*, and the RADwJ war service badge on the pocket flap (see Plate H24); the uniform is otherwise that of the civilian tramcar line. (Josef Charita)**

Uniforms

A large number of different types of uniforms were used by the women's branch of the RAD, but for the purposes of this work we will consider only the basic service dress, plus those worn by women specifically on military auxiliary duties.

The service dress consisted of a jacket, blouse, skirt, shoes and a fedora hat:

Uniform jacket This was a single-breasted tunic style garment cut from light brown wool, with a contrasting dark brown collar, four front buttons, and a matching cloth waist belt with a rectangular buckle made from horn or wood. The jacket skirt had two internal pockets with slanted external buttoned flaps. Leadership ranks had aluminium or gold-coloured cord piping to the collar depending on the rank grouping.

Skirt The skirt was cut from the same brown wool as the jacket, and could be either plain or with two front pleats.

Blouses A white blouse was worn under the jacket, buttoned up at the neck but not worn with a necktie. Both long- and short-sleeved models were used; the short-sleeved version could be worn without a jacket during the summer months in 'shirtsleeve order'. In place of a necktie, a metal brooch was worn at the throat, the design differing according to rank.

Hat A brown felt fedora style hat was worn, which featured a green hatband onto which was pinned, on the right side, a badge in silver- or gold-coloured metal depending upon rank.

Insignia

On the left upper sleeve was worn a shield-shaped patch with machine-woven insignia. The field was brown with a black outer edge. In the upper portion was a white disc bearing a swastika over a chevron formed from ears of barley, all in black. Below this was a Roman numeral indicating the area or *Bezirk* number of the wearer. This number and an inner border just inside the black edging were in white for junior grades, silver for officer equivalents, and gold for the most senior grades.

Brooches The brooch, designed by Egon Jantke, was worn at the neck and was made from stamped sheet metal. Various patterns existed; those which were introduced just after the outbreak of war are the most pertinent to this work, and fall into two basic patterns. The first, worn by auxiliaries between the ages of 18 and 21, were circular with the regulation swastika over ears of barley, all on a pebbled field. The

border, in conjunction with the brooch colour, indicated the wearer's rank as follows:

Arbeitsmaid	iron colour, smooth border
Kameradschaftsälteste	iron colour, ribbed border
Jungführerin	bronze colour, smooth border
Maidenunterführerin	bronze colour, ribbed border
Maidenführerin	bronze colour, 'roped' border
Maidenoberführerin	silver colour, ribbed border
Maidenhauptführerin	silver colour, 'roped' border
Stabsführerin	gold colour, smooth border
Stabsoberführerin	gold colour, ribbed border
Stabshauptführerin	gold colour, 'roped' border

Those who after a full year's service did not yet hold a leadership grading were permitted to wear a membership brooch in grey coloured metal, with the usual central motif but with the edging bearing the inscription *'Reichsarbeits dienst weibliche Jugend'*.

In addition to these, a further brooch is known, also round in shape but with the swastika in the centre surrounded not just by ears of barley, but by whole stalks on a textured background. The flat edge bore in old German Sütterlin script: *'Arbeit für den Volk, Adelt dich Selbst, Deutscher Frauenarbeitsdienst'* ('Work for our People, Enoble Yourselves, German Women's Labour Service'). Examples of these brooches bear serial numbers, suggesting that they were a form of award whose issue was regulated, but nothing more is known.

Cap badges A metal badge was worn on the band of the fedora. This featured the swastika and ears of barley motif in a circular frame, the field normally being pierced out. It was in iron colour for Arbeitsmaid and Kameradschaft- sälteste; in bronze colour for Jungführerin and Maidenunterführerin; in silver colour for Maidenober führerin and Maidenhauptführerin; and in gold colour for Stabsführerin to Stabshauptführerin. Interestingly, only the rank of Maiden- führerin wore an embroidered version of this badge, in bronze-coloured wire.

Collar piping & cuff rings The rank of Maidenunterführerin wore silver/black mixed cord piping to the collar. This changed to plain silver cord for the ranks of Maidenführerin to Maidenhauptführerin; and to gold for the ranks of Stabsführerin to Stabshauptführerin. Somewhat analogous to the 'command' rings of military auxiliaries, female RAD members with the rank of Kameradschaftsälteste wore a single 10mm wide brown cuff ring on both sleeves, while Jungführerinnen wore two such rings. These rings were replaced in 1943 with short grey braid stripes on a brown base.

Wartime uniforms

In July 1941, a special badge to recognise service as a

wartime helper was introduced. This consisted of a swastika over a chevron formed by two ears of barley. Over this chevron was draped a scroll bearing the initials 'RADwJ' (Reichsarbeitsdienst weibliche Jugend – 'State Labour Service Female Youth').

The standard RAD jacket when worn by women serving as drivers featured a dark green rather than dark brown contrasting collar.

In late 1943 the specialist leader or Sonderführer role was introduced. Three grades equivalent to the lower, middle and higher specialist careers found in the military, were Sonderführerin (U), Sonderführerin (M) and Sonderführerin (H). The first wore brown/red mixed cord collar piping and a bronze brooch with silver border; the second, silver/red collar cord and a silver brooch; and the third, gold/red collar cord and a gold brooch with silver border.

In 1944 a change was introduced for NCO equivalent grades specifically serving with Flak units. The rank of Kameradschaftälteste was changed to Obermaid and the rank of Jungführerin to Hauptmaid.

Late in the war a 'battledress blouse' type jacket was introduced for women RAD personnel. This short, single-breasted, waist-length garment had six front buttons and two patch breast pockets with buttoned flaps. The sleeve cuffs were also adjustable, with button fastening. The usual RAD badge was worn on the left upper sleeve. The skirt worn with this jacket had a two-pleat front and two slanted side pockets. This basic uniform was the same as that issued to military auxiliaries; however, the RAD version was not announced until February 1945, so what (if any) level of issue was achieved is unknown.

In many cases female RAD personnel wore the uniforms of the service with which they were serving as auxiliaries. In some cases, such as factory workers, this would be a simple overall. In other cases, such as railway guards/conductors or postal service workers, the full uniform of that service would be worn but with the Kriegshilfsdienst badge displayed on the lapel. A cuffband with the inscription *'RAD Kriegshilfsdienst'* was also worn on some occasions, and an armband *'Kriegshilfsdienst/ des Reichsarbeitsdienst'* is also known to have been used. Female RAD personnel serving with Luftwaffe Flak units wore the standard Luftwaffe auxiliary's uniform, but with the RAD sleeve patch.

National Socialist Women's Organisation *(NS-Frauenschaft)*

The NS-Frauenschaft was a voluntary organisation which was involved in social welfare, and assisted the Red Cross. It also, however, took part in propaganda work.

The official 'uniform' appears to have been a dark blue-black suit consisting of a jacket and skirt with a similarly coloured fedora hat. A silver-grey national emblem was worn on the upper left sleeve of the jacket. A cuffband with silver-grey

A senior member of the NS-Frauenschaft at a formal function, wearing the dark blue suit with white blouse. A silver embroidered national emblem was worn on the upper left sleeve, obscured in this shot. On the lower left sleeve is a cuffband with the inscription *'Reichsfrauenschaft'*; on the left breast she also wears the enamelled NSDAP membership badge and the triangular enamelled badge of the NS-Frauenschaft. See Plate F3. (Josef Charita)

(continued on page 33)

ARMY SIGNALS &
ECONOMICS AUXILIARIES, 1942–45

1: Haupthelferin, Nachrichtenhelferinnen, service dress

2: Oberführerin, Nachrichtenhelferinnen, service dress

3: Helferin, Wirtschaftshelferinnen, working dress

1

2

3

ARMY & ARMED FORCES AUXILIARIES, 1942–45

1: Nachrichtenhelferin, working smock

2: Nachrichtenhelferin, greatcoat

3: Stabsführerin, Wehrmachthelferinnen, 1945

1

2

3

AIR FORCE AUXILIARIES, 1943–44

1: Helferin, Luftnachrichtenhelferinnen, c.1943

2: Oberhelferin, Flakhelferinnen, 1944

3: Haupthelferin, Luftschutz Warndienst, 1944

1

2

3

C

NAVY AUXILIARIES, 1943–44

1: Hauptführerin, Marinehelferinnen, 1944

2: Marinehelferin, working dress, 1944

3: Marinehelferin, summer walking-out dress, 1943

1

2

3

GERMAN RED CROSS

1: DRK-Schwester, ward dress

2: DRK-Schwester, service dress

3: DRK-Schwester, North Africa, 1943

1

2

3

E

NATIONAL & PARTY WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS

1: BDM-Mädchen, Bund Deutscher Mädel

2: RAD-Maidenhauptführerin, Reichsarbeitsdienst

3: National staff member, NS-Frauenschaft

1

2

3

SS, CUSTOMS
& POLICE AUXILIARIES

1: Helferin, SS-Helferinnen; Reichsschule Oberrenheim

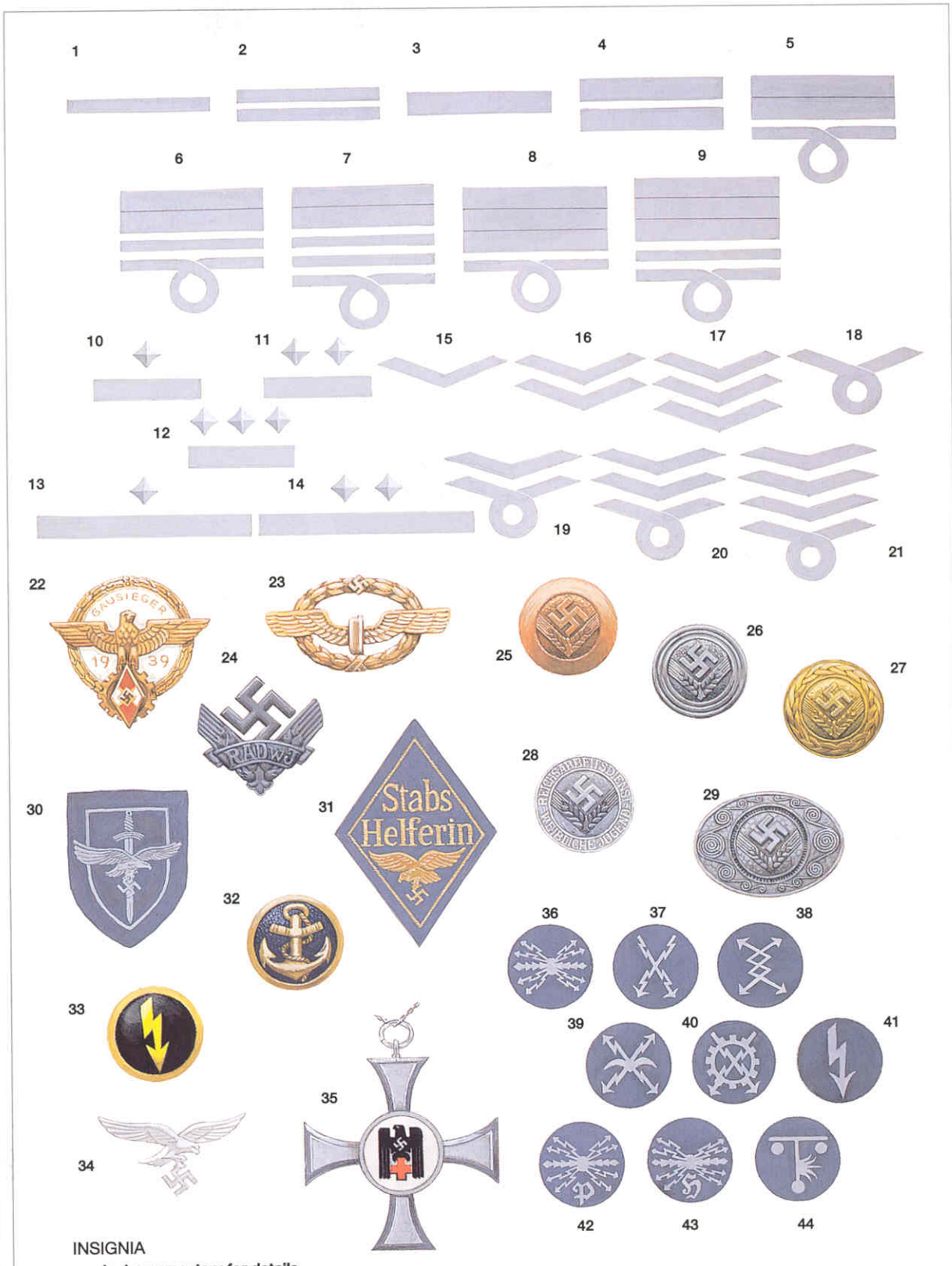
2: Zollhelferin, Zollgrenschutz

3: Polizeihelferin

1

2

3



INSIGNIA

see text commentary for details

A nursing auxiliary from the NS-Schwersternschaft. These nurses, who were members of the Nazi Party, wore a uniform very similar to regular Red Cross nurses, but the woven band around the cap bore the alternating letters 'FS' and 'NSV' (for National Socialistische Volkswohlfahrt, 'National Socialist Welfare Campaign'). Note also the cuffband with woven inscription *'NS-Schwesternschaft'*. (Josef Charita)

ABOVE RIGHT **At left is one of the most senior figures in the Frauenschaft movement. She, too, wears the *'Reichsfrauenschaft'* cuffband and the tip of the national emblem on her left sleeve can just be seen. She wears the Golden Party Badge on her left pocket, and a ribbon bar for a significant number of awards. (Josef Charita)**

lettering on a blue-black base indicating the wearer's district affiliation – e.g. *'Gau Westfalen Nord'* – was often worn on the lower left sleeve; a variant *'Reichsfrauenschaft'* is also known. An enamel organisation badge, of inverted triangular shape, was usually worn on the lapel of the jacket. One example is of black enamel with a bright blue rim; a white top panel bears the wording *'NAT.SOZ.FRAUENSCHAFT'*; the main emblem is a white cross with a small red central swastika and silver Gothic initials on the side and bottom arms. An armband was also often worn with normal civilian clothes. This featured an inverted triangular motif with the legend *'NS-Frauenschaft-Deutsches-Frauenwerk'* at its top. The field was black with a white border; in the centre was a circular 'sunwheel' swastika over a 'Tyr' rune.

Enamelled badges of this design are also known.

National Socialist League of German Sisters *(NS-Reichsbund Deutscher Schwestern)*

This purely political organisation consisted of members of the former Nurses' League and Sisters' League who were absorbed into the NS State Welfare Organisation (National Socialistische Volkswohlfahrt, NSV). They were not part of the Red Cross, but wore uniforms almost identical to those described below for the DRK, with the exception that their ward caps bore a dark blue ribbon with the alternating letters 'FS' and 'NSV', and the cloth sleeve patch was that for their own organisation.

GERMAN RED CROSS *(Deutsches Rotes Kreuz)*

Although each of the branches of the Wehrmacht had its own medical personnel, none had its own nursing staff. All nurses were provided by the German Red Cross (DRK). A rather large range of uniform garments were worn by Red Cross personnel. They fall into two basic categories: those worn by professional career members of the DRK staff, and those worn by regular DRK nurses.

DRK staff

Uniform jacket When in service dress rather than ward dress, a double-breasted medium grey wool jacket was worn by officer equivalent grades. This was fastened with two rows of two buttons, and had a contrasting dark grey collar; two internal breast pockets had shallow-pointed, buttoned external flaps. In common with jackets worn by other female auxiliaries, there was a pointed, outwards-buttoning tab on the lower part of each sleeve.

Headgear A dark grey felt fedora was worn with the jacket on formal occasions; the left side of the brim was often folded up and pinned against the crown. The DRK emblem was worn either on the hatband or on the side of the upturned brim. This was a white woven oval patch bearing a black German eagle, with a white swastika on its chest, grasping a red cross. When in ward dress a starched white traditional nurse's cap was worn, with a red cross on the front.

Greatcoat The grey wool greatcoat was double-breasted, and fastened by two rows of three buttons. It had internally hung pockets with external flaps at each hip. The sleeves, like those of the jacket, had buttoned tabs.

Blouses & skirts Junior ranks wore a medium grey pleated-front blouse with a white collar. On the right sleeve was worn the DRK emblem, a triangular patch with a silver-grey thread embroidered 'droop-winged' national emblem over the name of the wearer's parent district. On the left sleeve was worn a white armband bearing a red cross; above the cross in an arc of black Gothic letters was the word *'Deutsches'*, below it *'– Rotes Kreuz –'*. With the blouse was worn a matching grey skirt with two front pleats and concealed (slash) side pockets. When in ward dress a white apron was worn, usually a bib-fronted style typical of nursing dress of the period, with shoulder straps and a large pocket on the right side of the front. Senior ranks – officer equivalents – wore a similar blouse but with the collar in the same grey as the body. They did not wear white aprons with ward dress, exposing the grey skirt.

Rank structure and insignia

Rank was displayed on the collar of the blouse and jacket as follows:

Helferin	no insignia
Vorhelferin	one blue pip on each collar
Oberhelferin	two blue pips
Haupthelferin	three blue pips
Wachtführerin	one silver pip
Oberwachtführerin	two silver pips
Hauptführerin	three silver pips
Feldführerin	one gold pip
Oberfeldführerin	two gold pips
Oberstführerin	three gold pips
Generalführerin	one gold leaf
Generalhauptführerin	two gold leaves

Red Cross nurses

The basic uniform worn by DRK nurses during wartime consisted of the medium grey pleated-front blouse with contrasting white collar, combined with a skirt in matching colour with

OPPOSITE **A young DRK nurse in basic ward dress with starched cap and apron, little different from that worn by nurses throughout the world. The pinstriped blouse in seen in many photographs; like the regulation grey blouse it has a detachable white collar. On her left sleeve is a white armband with the red cross emblem surrounded by the words *'Deutsches/Rotes/Kreuz'* in black Gothic script. (Otto Spronk)**

OPPOSITE BELOW **The formal service dress of the DRK nurse included this grey jacket; the very pale grey collar patches bore small enamelled red crosses, and some had silver-grey thread inner borders. The DRK badge of an eagle clutching the red cross was worn on the left side of the fedora hat, and as an enamelled brooch at the throat. The triangular badge worn on the lapel is one of those identifying members of the NS-Frauenschaft; it bears a 'sunwheel' swastika above a 'Tyr' rune. (Robert Noss)**

A recruiting poster asks all women from 16 to 21 years of age to come to the aid of Germany's soldiers as nursing auxiliaries. Volunteers are invited to attend first aid training with the BDM, and BDM girls are exhorted to answer 'the call of duty'. (Otto Spronk)

Deutsches Mädel
Dich geht es an!
Wir brauchen alle 16-21jährigen Mädel
als Helferinnen für unsere Soldaten
Komm zur Gesundheitsdienstausbildung des BDM.
In den nächsten Wochen werden für alle 16-21 jährigen Mädel 20 doppelstündige Gesundheitsdienstkurse unter der fachlichen Leitung des DRK. beginnen. Jedes Mädel ist verpflichtet daran teilzunehmen.
BDM.-Mädel, die Pflicht ruft Dich!

two front pleats and concealed pockets at each side. The DRK triangular cloth patch was worn on the right sleeve, and a plain white armband with red cross on the left. The collar was worn buttoned up, with an enamelled DRK brooch (see below) worn at the throat. A starched white nurse's cap was worn, with a woven band stitched along its front edge; this featured red crosses alternating with the letters 'RK'. With ward dress a white apron, normally of the bib-fronted type, was worn over the blouse and skirt.

An alternative was a similar blouse but with a grey collar matching the body of the garment. This style blouse was worn with Red Cross collar patches: rectangles of very pale grey cloth, with an inner edging of aluminium cord, bearing enamelled red crosses centrally. The triangular DRK patch and Red Cross armband were worn on the sleeves. The skirt worn with this blouse had a central front pleat to half way up from the hem, and five buttons set vertically at the top of the side pleats.

Photographic evidence also shows the wear of white blouses when in service or walking-out dress; and, particularly by the most junior DRK Helferinnen auxiliaries, of pinstripe blouses with ward dress, apparently in blue-grey and white. The exact distinction is unknown at this time.

Uniform jacket The grey wool jacket described above was provided for service dress wear: double-breasted, with two rows of two buttons, two internal breast pockets with shallow-pointed, buttoned flaps, a dark grey contrasting collar, and outwards-buttoning sleeve tabs. The collar patches described above were also worn on this jacket, as were the standard triangular DRK sleeve patch and armband. The jacket was worn with a plain-fronted grey wool skirt, featuring button fastening at the left side all the way from waist to hem.

Tropical jacket Nurses serving in hot climates were often issued with a light golden-tan coloured cotton bush jacket to be worn over the blouse, with matching skirt. This jacket had two breast pockets and two skirt pockets of patch type with buttoned flaps. The standard DRK triangular patch was worn on the right sleeve and the armband often, but not always, on the left. Nurses serving in North Africa were also entitled to wear the *'AFRIKAKORPS'* formation cuffband on the lower right sleeve.

Brooches

The brooch worn at the throat of the nurse's blouse came in several patterns. The basic

A recruiting poster exhorting Flemish women to serve as nursing auxiliaries, to support the Flemish volunteers serving with the Waffen-SS on the Eastern Front in the 'Langemarck' Brigade (later, Division). Note the black-on-yellow rampant lion of Flanders worn as a national shield on her right upper sleeve. She too wears the DRK version of the red cross brassard. (Otto Spronk)

badge featured a white enamelled circular field with a black enamelled DRK eagle clasping a red cross and with a white swastika on its chest. A black border surrounded the white field, bearing the inscription *'Deutsches Rotes Kreuz – Schwesternschaft'* in Gothic lettering. Senior grades wore a similar badge but with an outer border featuring a gold geometric pattern and the words *'Deutsches Rotes Kreuz – Schwesternhelferin'*. Nursing auxiliaries wore a similar badge but bearing only a plain red cross on the white field, and on the black border the inscription *'Deutsches Rotes Kreuz – Helferin'*.

Other brooches sometimes worn included that for the Nurses' Association; this was similar to the basic brooch, but oval rather than round, and bore the *'– Schwesternschaft'* version of the inscription. A badge similar to that worn by auxiliaries also identified the so-called Red Cross Samaritans or volunteer helpers, but with the word *'– Samariterin'*.

The Red Cross was unusual amongst female organisations in having its own range of **awards and decorations**. Many of these were superseded before the outbreak of war by a new range of awards designated as for 'Social Welfare'. There remained, however, a small number of awards for loyal service by German female Red Cross personnel that were bestowed throughout the period 1939–45 and which may be seen on original wartime photos:

Cross for 10 Years' Service as a Nurse or Sister A 50mm silver cross with a central white enamelled disc bearing the DRK black eagle clutching a red cross; the reverse was plain. This cross was suspended around the neck on a long silver chain.

Cross for 25 Years' Service as a Nurse or Sister A similar cross, but with the addition of an oakleaf border to the central white disc.

Loyal Service Cross for Matrons As for the 10 Years' Cross, but with all metal parts in gold, worn from a long gold neck chain.

Loyal Service Cross for Senior Matrons As for the 25 Years' Cross but with all metal parts in gold, and worn from a gold chain.

DRK Badge of Honour A small (28mm diameter) wreath of gold-coloured oakleaves with, in its centre, the standard enamelled DRK eagle clutching a red cross. It was worn on the lapel of the jacket.

Iron Cross awards to DRK nurses

DRK nurses often served in front line field hospitals, at considerable risk to themselves, and a number of them figure among the small band of women who were awarded the Iron Cross 2nd Class for gallantry. The following are a few representative examples:

DRK-Schwester Elfriede Wnuk was only the second woman (after the famous test pilot Hanna Reitsch) to receive the Iron Cross. Her award, in September 1942, was for the example of bravery she set for others in

Sister Ilse Schulz, a veteran of the whole North African campaign, was decorated with the Iron Cross in April 1943 for gallantry while tending the wounded under fire. She wears its ribbon in the buttonhole of her tropical bushjacket; note also the *'AFRIKAKORPS'* formation cuffband, and the DRK district badge on her upper right sleeve. See Plate E3. (Josef Charita)

ABOVE RIGHT **These nursing auxiliaries appear to be providing first aid cover for personnel of the State Post Office (Deutsches Reichs Post). (Otto Spronk)**

tending the sick and wounded while under enemy attack. She was seriously wounded when her hospital was hit by an Allied bombing raid. As well as the Iron Cross, Wnuk held the 1941/42 East Front Winter Campaign Medal (Medaille Winterschlacht im Osten), and the Wound Badge (Verwundetenab-zeichen) in Silver for wounds suffered on three and four occasions. *DRK-Schwester Magda Darchniger,* the third recipient (for a similar act of bravery in 1942) also held these two awards. *DRK-Schwester Marga Droste,* the second nursing sister to be so decorated, received the EKII in September 1942 for remaining at her post at the Naval Hospital in Wilhelmshaven during a heavy Allied bombing raid despite being injured herself.

DRK-Schwester Greta Fock, serving with Rommel's army in North Africa, was assisting an Army surgeon with a delicate operation in a field hospital when it came under enemy fire. Fock refused to take shelter as the operation was at a critical stage, and remained by the surgeon's side until surgery was completed. Her Iron Cross was awarded in April 1943; Fock served for two years in North Africa, and also earned the right to wear the *'AFRIKA'* commemorative cuffband. A contemporary of hers, decorated in the same month and also a veteran of the whole two-year African campaign, was *DRK-Schwester Ilse Schulz.*

DRK-Helferin Gräfin Melitta Schenk von Stauffenberg was the wife of the severely wounded war hero who was executed for his attempt to blow up Hitler in the July 1944 Bomb Plot. The extraordinary Countess von Stauffenberg was a qualified pilot as well as a voluntary nursing auxiliary. Despite her privileged position she showed considerable determination to contribute to the care of wounded soldiers, and was awarded the Iron Cross in 1942.

DRK-Schwester Liselotte Hensel and *DRK-Bereitschaftsleiterin Holzmann* both received the Iron Cross for bravery during the Allied fire bombing of Hamburg in August 1943. Holzmann and her colleagues cared for the wounded and homeless day and night; she was responsible for saving many lives, driving an ambulance transporting the seriously wounded to hospital through the streets of Hamburg as bombs fell all around her.

The following DRK female auxiliaries also received the Iron Cross for similar acts of selfless bravery: DRK-Schwestern Hanny Weber and Geolinde Münche (1942); DRK-Schwester Elfriede Gunia and DRK-Helferin Ilse Daub (April 1944); DRK-Schwestern Greta Grafenkamp and Ruth Raabe, Ärtzin (Dr) Elizabeth Potuz (February 1945); DRK-Schwestern Elfriede Muth and Ursula Kogel, DRK-Helferinnen Liselotte Schlotterbeck, Rohna von Ceuern and Anna Wohlschütz (March 1945). Records also show two foreign volunteer nurses serving with the DRK as being awarded the Iron Cross. One, name unknown, serving with the Army's Walloon (Belgian) volunteer unit, was decorated in 1942; the other, a Norwegian nurse named Anne Grunhild Moxnes, received the award in April 1944.

Large numbers of DRK nurses and other women auxiliaries were also decorated with the War Merit Cross, for meritorious behaviour not in the presence of the enemy. Only two German women were decorated with the Iron Cross 1st Class: one was Flugkapitän Hanna Reitsch, the other a DRK-Schwester, Else Grossmann, who received the award in January 1945.

LEAGUE OF GERMAN MAIDENS
(Bund Deutscher Mädel)

The BDM was effectively the female branch of the Hitler Youth, and from 1941 all girls between the ages of 15 and 21 were expected to join. The BDM was formed in 1928 and was initially simply one of many entirely apolitical voluntary youth organisations that then existed, just as they did in other countries – the interwar years were a highpoint of organised youth activity in Britain and the USA, too. The Nazis brought all existing youth organisations together under the aegis of the Hitler Jugend in 1936, and HJ membership for boys became compulsory in March 1939; this requirement was extended to girls two years later.

A young BDM auxiliary involved in the Landdienst programme. She wears a brown double-breasted uniform jacket; on the left sleeve she displays the regulation triangular badge with the wearer's home district (here, *'Mitte/Sachsen'*), the large woven HJ diamond badge in red, white and black, and on the forearm a *'Landdienst'* cuffband. The small enamelled HJ membership badge is worn on the left lapel. (Josef Charita)

Even in peacetime HJ boys were given para-military training in preparation for the military service that all would be obliged to undergo, but this was not the case for girls. In wartime, male members of the HJ increasingly performed para-military tasks including patrol duties, assisting Luftwaffe flak crews and so forth, but the BDM were still not allowed to participate. One major role they did play, however, was in the 'KLV' programme. Germany, like Britain, was forced to take measures to protect the country's children from the dangers of enemy air attacks, and one method was to evacuate children to temporary homes in the safety of the countryside, away from large cities and industrial targets. Many BDM girls became involved in the care of children during this Kinderlandverschickung programme – literally, 'the sending of children to the land'.

There is at least one recorded example of a young BDM girl being decorated with the Iron Cross: BDM-Mädchen Ottilie Stephan received the decoration in February 1945, but details are not known at this time.

A BDM girl employed on the Kinderlandverschickung child evacuation programme. She wears a civilian headscarf and apron over her uniform. The HJ diamond badge is missing from the left sleeve, but the triangular regional badge is displayed, as is a black-on-white 'Tyr' rune patch. The cuffband *'K.L.V.-Sellin'* identifies the Kinderlandverschickung programme, and the Sellin district. (Josef Charita)

Uniform and insignia

The basic uniform worn by BDM girls involved in such auxiliary work included a white poplin blouse with long sleeves and four-button front fastening. Two breast pockets were provided, fastened on the wartime blouse with two small pearl buttons. Worn with this blouse was a dark blue skirt with belt loops around the waist, a central front pleat and a button-up slash fastening on the left side; two internal front pockets had slanted, buttoned external flaps. A black scarf was worn at the neck, with an interwoven leather 'woggle' or slipknot. In warm weather a short-sleeve version of the blouse could be worn. In cooler months a short jacket in light brown imitation suede material was worn. This was single-breasted, with five front buttons and half-belts at each side of the rear hips for adjustment to fit. A small pointed, outwards-buttoning tab adjusted the bottom of each sleeve. A dark blue velveteen'Robin Hood' style cap devoid of insignia, white ankle socks and brown shoes completed the standard BDM service uniform.

On the upper left sleeve was worn a black triangular patch with a silver-grey inner border and the name of the wearer's home area in silver-grey Gothic script. Below this patch was worn the red-white diamond-shaped Hitler Youth insignia with a black swastika in the centre. A smaller version of the same badge in enamelled metal was often pinned to the left breast pocket.

Rank was indicated by a cord worn around the neck; a hook on one end of the cord passed through the leather slipknot of the scarf and attached to the left breast pocket. The colour sequence was as follows:

Mädelschaftführerin	two-colour cord in colours of relevant city/state
Mädelscharführerin	green
Mädelgruppenführerin	green/white
Ringführerin	white
Untergauführerin	red
Gauführerin	red/black
Obergauführerin	black
Gauverbandsführerin	silver/black

Prior to the outbreak of war a special uniform was introduced for leadership ranks. This featured a dark blue single-breasted tunic style jacket, fastened by six buttons and without external pockets. It was worn with the standard BDM white blouse, matching dark blue skirt and dark blue high-heeled shoes. Over the left breast was worn a

shield-shaped cloth patch in which was embroidered an eagle with wings spread, with a swastika embroidered on its chest; unit numbers were embroidered above the eagle's head. Specific rank was indicated as follows, by silver- and gold-coloured cord edging and badges embroidered in matching wire:

Gruppenführerin	no patch edging
Ringführerin	narrow silver cord edging
Untergauführerin	double narrow edging
Gauführerin	one thick & one narrow edging
Obergauführerin	double narrow gold edging
Reichsreferentin	gold oakleaf border

A cuffband was produced bearing the inscription *'Kinderland-verschickung'* machine-embroidered onto a woven rayon band. Photos of this band in wear are rare, and so far limited to male personnel. A variant style of band, with the initials 'KLV' followed by the town or district name, is also known to have been produced and there is photographic evidence of its wear by female staff on the lower left sleeve of the BDM jacket.

One other function performed by the BDM was service in the Landdienst. In peacetime this programme had been principally concerned with helping to slow down the drift of population away from the country and into the large towns. However, after the outbreak of war personnel were also tasked with helping with the 'Germanisation' of occupied territories in the East, by recruiting suitable young persons to relocate to these areas and help colonise them with Germanic bloodstock. By 1940 the SS had begun taking a serious interest in the Landdienst programme. Their intent was to recruit sufficient numbers of men of suitable racial purity, who would be militarily trained and then settled in the occupied areas as farmers, working the land and also providing a defensive 'buffer zone' between Germany and the East.

Personnel serving with the Landdienst programme wore standard BDM uniform with the addition of a machine-woven cuffband on the lower left sleeve, in black with silver-grey Gothic lettering *'Landdienst der HJ'*.

Women also served on the national staff of the Hitler Jugend. On the left sleeve of her dark blue jacket this individual wears an *'RJF'* cuffband, for *Reichs Jugend Führung*, 'State Youth Leadership'. A silver embroidered national emblem is worn within a shield shaped patch on the left breast. (Josef Charita)

SS FEMALE AUXILIARIES
(SS-Helferinnen u. SS-Kriegshelferinnen)

Voluntary female SS auxiliaries served in two basic categories: as Signals personnel, who were designated as SS-Helferinnen; and as general duties wartime auxiliaries, designated as SS-Kriegshelferinnen. Auxiliaries were recruited from women aged between 17 and 30 and were employed in the same type of tasks – generally related to communications – as their counterparts in the armed forces: radio operators, telephonists, teletype and teleprinter operators, etc.

Uniforms

Auxiliaries were issued with a field-grey single-breasted jacket with three-button fastening; the upper collar was piped with silver. It had two skirt pockets with non-buttoned rectangular flaps, and a single open left breast pocket. On the latter was worn an oval black cloth patch with a silver cord edging, bearing the SS runes woven in silver-grey thread or aluminium wire. The SS version of the national emblem was worn on the upper left sleeve; and it is known that at least some auxiliaries wore on the left forearm the SS signallers' sleeve

OPPOSITE **An SS-Helferin. The jacket in field-grey wool is almost identical to those worn by other women auxiliaries, though with silver-grey collar piping, but the black wool field cap was of unique design. The SS pattern national emblem is worn on the cap and upper left sleeve. On the left breast pocket of the jacket is a black oval cloth patch edged in silver-grey and bearing the *SS-Sigrunen*. (Otto Spronk)**

The pocket badge of SS women auxiliaries was in black cloth with runes either machine-embroidered in silver-grey thread, or – as here – hand-embroidered in aluminium wire; the patch is edged in twisted aluminium cord. The cuffband was worn by the staff of the SS auxiliaries' school at Oberrenheim. (Otto Spronk)

badge – a silver-grey Blitz on a black diamond-shaped patch. The jacket was worn over a plain white blouse with collar worn buttoned at the neck; no necktie, cravat or brooch were worn. A plain matching field-grey skirt was worn, and black shoes.

The field cap worn with this uniform was in black wool, and lacked the turn-up flap normally found on German sidecaps. In most cases the headgear worn by women auxiliaries was closely modelled on the field cap worn by men of that organisation; that of the SS-Helferinnen was a unique female version. It bore an SS pattern national emblem (of sleeve size) at the front of the crown, but the death's-head insignia displayed by male personnel was omitted.

SS-Auxiliaries stationed at the special auxiliary training school at Oberrenheim also wore a cuffband on the lower left sleeve. This was in black machine-woven rayon with silver-grey edges and the inscription *'Reichsschule-SS'*.

A special insignia was introduced for SS women auxiliaries with the status of an award. Instituted on 28 July 1943, the Silberspange für SS-Helferinnen was a clasp in genuine silver, consisting of a rectangular frame within which was a central pair of SS runes, with on each side a spray of oakleaves. Superimposed on the oakleaves to the left were the letters 'HEL' and on the right 'FEN', making the word 'Helfen'. Original examples of the clasp exist, in 800-marked silver and some bearing what appear to be issue numbers, but no records appear to have survived detailing any awards that may have been made, and no photos have et emerged of this clasp being worn.

The SS-Kriegshelferinnen wore a similar uniform, but were not permitted to wear either the cuffband or the SS runes patch on the breast pocket. Among the duties performed by these women was guarding female inmates of the concentration camps; many of these SS auxiliaries were at least as cruel as their male counterparts, and many were subsequently tried for war crimes.

Customs Auxiliaries *(Zoll-Helferinnen)*

The customs service is one of the little-known areas where female auxiliaries were employed. In the summer of 1941 a small number of women, thought to have numbered no more than 100, volunteered to transfer from the DRK into the customs service. It is not believed that any further intakes followed. These volunteers served in many locations outside Germany, predominantly in Western Europe. In view of the small numbers

The rare silver clasp instituted in July 1943 for award to SS-Helferinnen for distinguished service. This Silberspange für SS-Helferinnen was to be awarded to those auxiliaries who had completed a two-year probationary period with good behaviour and proficient service; it could be rescinded in the case of later disciplinary offences. No documentary or photographic evidence for actual awards has come to light so far. (Otto Spronk)

involved there was no special rank structure, all serving simply with the rank of 'Helferin'.

The uniform was the conventional single-breasted grey wool jacket with three front buttons, worn with a matching skirt and a white blouse with black necktie. On the left forearm of the jacket was worn the customs service cuffband: a machine-woven dark green artificial silk band with edging, and a national emblem with slightly upswept wings, in aluminium thread. Collar patches were worn on the jacket: plain parallelograms of dark green cloth with silver-coloured serrated borders – these bore no emblems. A grey field cap was worn with this outfit. Unusually, it retained the cockade in national colours which was normally omitted from female auxiliaries' caps; above this on the front of the crown was a machine-woven national emblem of the same pattern as displayed on the cuffband.

* * *

In addition to the military and civil/political auxiliary services mentioned here, huge numbers of women found work in all types of organisations in jobs that had formerly been held by men. In many cases no special uniforms were produced for female employees and women who served merely had to use the smaller sizes of men's uniforms. The photographs in this book include several examples – female railway guards and inspectors, air raid wardens, Police auxiliaries, etc. In many cases a simple protective overall was issued, with the insignia of the relevant organisation applied to the sleeve. In most cases the headgear worn would simply be the standard male issue.

A female employee of the Deutsches Reichs Post. In many cases, women auxiliaries were simply issued with male clothing and had no special garments of their own; the peaked cap worn by this woman is the regulation male issue DRP headgear. Her lapel pin is that of the NSFK (National Socialist Flying Corps), and is not related to her postal duties. (Robert Noss)

Strangely, although women railway auxiliaries never had a range of special uniforms and insignia like their military colleagues, they were presented with one of Germany's rarest awards: the Dienstnadel für deutsche Eisenbahnerinnen (Service Pin for German Female Railway Auxiliaries). Instituted in August 1944, the badge consisted of an oval wreath of laurel leaves with a swastika at its apex, and a small tied ribbon at its base; lying across its centre was a winged railway wheel. It measured 30mm by 22mm, and the reverse featured a horizontal brooch pin. This award was made in three grades: Bronze for three years', Silver for six years' and Gold for ten years' service. The first awards were made in October 1944, when 30 female Reichsbahn auxiliaries were decorated by Secretary of State Dr Ganzenmuller. It is believed that only Bronze and Silver grades had been awarded by the end of the war.

One further award which deserves mention is the Victor's badge in the National Trades Competition. Included among those eligible were women between the ages of 15 and 21 years, and those women of any age attending trade schools or colleges. Many of those who had taken over male jobs in industry would thus have been eligible. After the outbreak of war this competition became known as the Kriegsberufswettkämpfe, or War Trades

Competition. Tests were held for skill in the relevant trade, political theory, mathematics and composition. Prizes were awarded at local level (Kreissieger), regional level (Gausieger) and national level (Reichssieger). The badge consisted of a round wreath of laurel leaves surrounding a white enamelled field. In the centre was a national eagle emblem grasping a cogwheel, in the centre of which was applied an enamelled Hitler Youth badge (though this award was open to many who could hardly be described as youths). Above the eagle was the designation of the award (*Reichssieger, Gausieger, Kreissieger*) and below it the year of the competition. Metal parts were in gold finish for the national award, silver for regional, and bronze for local level. This award was but one more indication that, whether by choice or expedience, German women were being accepted into many areas of the national war effort as equals with their male counterparts.

Germany's women certainly contributed their fair share to the war effort, and certainly suffered alongside their menfolk. The air war potentially brought the horrors of the front line to every German town; no small number of female auxiliaries were killed in war zones, in the occupied territories and in Germany itself; and like the mass of their countrywomen, many suffered appallingly when they fell into the hands of the vengeful Red Army surging into the heart of Germany in 1945.

LEFT **A female auxiliary from the State Railways (Reichsbahn). The cap insignia shows a two-winged wheel below a cogwheel encircling a swastika. On each collar is a single-winged wheel emblem. Note the Nazi Party membership badge: suitable employment was always much easier to find for those who supported the Party. (Otto Spronk)**

ABOVE **Another Reichsbahn auxiliary wearing a slightly different, later pattern of insignia. The dark blue cap bears a regulation national emblem and cockade, and the collar patches now show a metal pin-on two-winged wheel over a separate swastika. None of these insignia were specific solely to female personnel. (Otto Spronk)**

THE PLATES

A1: Haupthelferin, Nachrichtenhelferinnen des Heeres, post-March 1942

This figure represents the typical appearance of Army signals auxiliaries, the 'Blitzmädchen' or 'lightning girls'. Shown here is basic service dress, consisting of the early double-breasted style of grey wool jacket and skirt, worn with a field cap similar to that worn by male soldiers but piped at the crown and front 'scallop' of the flap in the signals Waffenfarbe of lemon-yellow. The 'Blitz' or lightning insignia of the qualified signals specialist is displayed on the left sleeve, the left side of the cap, and on her necktie brooch. The rank insignia of Haupthelferin after the 25 March 1942 regulations was a chevron with one pip worn on the left sleeve below her 'trade' badge. On her left forearm is the cuffband *'NH des Heeres'* in black script on yellow. The outfit is completed by black shoes and a black leather handbag.

A2: Oberführerin, Nachrichtenhelferinnen des Heeres, post-March 1942

This senior staff member of the signals auxiliary branch wears the same basic uniform. Her leadership status is shown by the yellow/black twist cord on her cap (in place of the smooth yellow piping of the junior ranks), round her collar, and edging both the cap and sleeve 'Blitz' patches.

OPPOSITE **A good view of the 'hip-length' blue-grey jacket with integral cloth belt issued to female Luftwaffe auxiliaries, here worn with the M43 style cap by a Flakhelferin of a searchlight crew; note the single rank chevron. See Plate C2. (Courtesy Brian L.Davis)**

Three Army Signals Auxiliaries pose after having been presented with the War Merit Cross with Swords. They wear regulation grey service dress and piped field caps, and the auxiliary at right can be seen to wear the black-on-yellow cuffband. See Plate A1. (Courtesy Brian L.Davis)

Her exact rank is shown by the silver braid chevron and pip on her collar. Note also the appointment cuffband *'Stab des NH'* in silver-grey on black.

A3: Wirtschaftshelferin des Heers, 1942–45

At the opposite end of the scale from the smartly dressed senior staff leader, this humble 'economics assistant' is carrying out unskilled tasks. These women wore civilian clothing or an overall as illustrated, their position as Army auxiliaries being confirmed by the green cuffband bearing the inscription *'Wirtschaftshelferin/des Heeres'* in two lines of pale grey-green lettering.

B1: Nachrichtenhelferin des Heeres, working smock

The working smock was issued in a number of different colours; here it is cut from a grey fabric with a slight sheen. The white collar liner was removable for washing. The national emblem is attached on the right breast and, in this case, the signals 'Blitz' patch to the left sleeve. The display of the national emblem was regulation for Army auxiliaries but forbidden on the working smocks worn by Luftwaffe auxiliaries.

B2: Nachrichtenhelferin des Heeres, greatcoat

This auxiliary wears the warm woollen greatcoat provided for use in the colder months. Note that unlike the male greatcoat, which was of mid-calf length, the female version is significantly shorter. The normal trade and rank insignia worn on the tunic were replicated on the greatcoat.

B3: Stabsführerin, Wehrmachthelferinnen, 1945

This figure shows the *intended* final appearance of the Armed Forces Auxiliary, once the November 1944 regulations standardising the appearance and rank insignia of female personnel across all three armed forces had been put into effect. The 1942 system of rank insignia has now been replaced by a series of cuff rings in 10mm and 5mm braid; this officer equivalent has the rank of Stabsführerin, as indicated by three wide rings over a single narrow looped ring. Her collar and cap are piped in the silver twist cord of leadership ranks.

C1: Helferin, Luftnachrichtenhelferinnen, c.1943

This figure represents a typical Luftwaffe signals auxiliary in normal service dress. The single-breasted, three-button uniform jacket in Luftwaffe blue-grey cloth no longer has the fabric waist belt initially provided. Insignia are the distinctive Luftwaffe style 'flying' eagle and swastika national emblem over the right breast; a left sleeve chevron of rank, below the trade or speciality badge of a qualified radio operator; and a cuff ring showing her appointment as leader of a Betriebszug – unusual for such a junior rank, but strict military manning levels did not always apply to auxiliary detachments. The field cap, modelled closely on the Fliegermütze worn by airmen, is piped in the copper-brown Waffenfarbe of the Luftwaffe signals branch. The necktie stickpin is a miniature Luftwaffe eagle.

C2: Oberhelferin, Flakhelferinnen, 1944

This young woman serving with the Flakartillerie in the air defence system wears a far more functional uniform for outdoor work than the normal female auxiliary's service dress. The jacket is 'hip' or three-quarter length, with an integral cloth waist belt and large patch skirt pockets. It bears the national emblem on the right breast; the right sleeve insignia specific to the Flakhelferinnen; and on the left sleeve the two chevrons of Oberhelferin – the usual range of trade qualification badges were worn above any badges of rank. Rather than a skirt she wears long, loose ski-trousers bloused at the ankle over normal male issue ankle boots. Her peaked field cap is almost identical to the M43 Einheitsfeldmütze worn by male personnel, the only obvious difference being the usual omission of the national cockade below the national emblem.

C3: Haupthelferin, Luftschutz Warndienst, 1944

The basic dress of the Air Raid Warning Service is the same as that worn by the Air Signals Auxiliaries, but differenced by special insignia. Green cord piping edges the flap of her field cap. On the crown of the cap and the right breast is the machine-woven insignia of the Luftschutz; on the left sleeve is a green patch with cord edging, bearing the letters 'LSW' over two crossed lightning bolts. The two sleeve rings worn indicate her position as leader of a platoon-sized unit. The strip of braid and three pips above indicate the rank of Haupthelferin.

D1: Marinehauptführerin, Marinehelferinnen, 1944

A naval auxiliary in standard service dress: in this case the early Army pattern double-breasted grey uniform, one of several expedients adopted due to the absence of a uniform specifically for Navy female auxiliaries. It is worn with the Kriegsmarine's dark blue field or 'board' cap; before 1944 the national emblem in the Navy's golden-yellow was worn on the front of the crown. Yellow/black cord edged the flap of the cap and jacket collar for junior leadership grades up to and including Marinehauptführerin, which exact rank is indicated by the two collar pips. Note that the yellow/black edging is also applied to her blouse collar. On her left forearm is the cuffband *'Marinehelferin'*.

D2: Marinehelferin, working dress, 1944

The practical late war M44 pattern dress for naval auxiliaries,

presumably issued when it was recognised that many of these women would have to work out of doors in rougher activities than secretarial work. A dark blue wool waist length jacket very similar in style to the Army's M44 'battledress' is worn with a matching skirt, though ski trousers might also be worn. Headgear is modelled on the M43 field cap, but without drop-down side flaps. Only the national emblem is worn on the front, with no cockade.

D3: Marinehelferin, summer walking-out dress, 1943

In summer months the white blouse with short sleeves was often worn, with either a matching white skirt or the grey service dress skirt. No rank insignia were worn on the blouse, but the lack of junior or senior leadership grade cord piping from the cap and collar indicates that she is of no higher rank than Marinehaupthelferin.

E1: DRK-Schwester, Deutsches Rotes Kreuz

This German Red Cross nurse wears a version of ward dress. Her grey blouse has many vertical pleats and is worn with a white collar (removable for washing) and a matching grey skirt. Normal ward dress was a bib-fronted white apron as shown in several photographs in this book; here we have given her a waist length working apron in order to show the blouse in detail. On her left arm is the DRK red cross armband with the name of that organisation in black around the cross; wartime nursing auxiliaries seem to have worn the red cross only. On her right upper sleeve is a black triangular patch with a 'droop-winged' national emblem above the name of her home district. The Red Cross brooch is worn at the throat. The traditional white starched nurse's cap, white stockings and black laced shoes complete the outfit. The ribbon fixed to the front edge of her blouse identifies this nurse as one of the few to have been decorated with the Iron Cross 2nd Class, perhaps for bravery during Allied air raids.

E2: DRK-Schwester, Deutsches Rotes Kreuz

The grey service dress uniform featured a double-breasted jacket with a contrasting dark grey collar, on which were displayed the standard Red Cross collar patches. The usual armband and district badge are worn on the jacket. A dark grey fedora hat was worn with the left side of the brim pinned up and displaying a woven or enamelled German Red Cross badge.

E3: DRK-Schwester, North Africa, 1943

Nurses serving at the front in tropical regions wore a khaki-tan coloured bush jacket and skirt with the white issue blouse; the breast pockets had one button, the skirt pockets two. This nurse, modelled on one of several women decorated for gallantry during long service in North Africa, wears the 'AFRIKAKORPS' cuffband on the lower right sleeve, the ribbon of the Iron Cross in the second buttonhole, and a Wound Badge in Black. The original district badge is retained on the right upper sleeve. Note the narrow band applied to the white cap, with an alternating pattern of red crosses and 'RK' lettering.

F1: BDM-Mädchen, Bund Deutscher Mädel

This teenage member of the female section of the Hitler Youth organisation is serving as a child care auxiliary on the Kinderlandverschickung (KLV) programme. She wears the BDM's standard white blouse with necktie and leather slipknot, dark blue skirt, and winter synthetic suede jacket.

On her left forearm she wears a black cuffband with silver-grey lettering *'K.L.V.-Sellin'*. On the centre of the sleeve is the large woven 'Hitler Jugend' diamond-shaped badge, and above this she displays the normal triangular district badge.

F2: RAD-Maidenhauptführerin, Reichsarbeitsdienst

This State Labour Corps auxiliary wears service dress: a light brown wool jacket with constrasting dark brown collar, a matching light brown skirt and a dark brown fedora hat with a light band. The silver piping around the collar indicates a leadership grade, and the woven shield on the left upper sleeve the wearer's unit affiliation. The brooch worn at the throat varied in details according to rank; that of Maidenhauptführerin was silver with a 'roped' border. The standard RAD hat badge is worn on the right side of the fedora.

F3: National staff member, NS-Frauenschaft

This Nazi political organisation became heavily involved in welfare work and propaganda duties, and so could be classified as auxiliaries contributing to the war effort. The basic uniform was a smart dark blue suit worn with a fedora hat and white blouse. On the upper left sleeve is a silver wire national emblem; the dark blue cuffband worn on the left forearm bears the title *'Reichsfrauenschaft'* in silver script. This presumably refers to the national staff of the organisation; bands with regional names were the most commonly seen. On the left breast of the jacket is worn a Party membership badge, and the triangular enamelled badge of the NS-Frauenschaft.

OPPOSITE **An practical but unflattering outfit: this woman Police auxiliary on traffic duty wears a heavy one-piece 'boiler suit' overall with the regulation Police eagle badge on the left sleeve. Cf Plate G3. (Josef Charita)**

Luftwaffe switchboard operators. The woman at left wears the telephone operator's trade badge, above the single looped chevron of Führerin (mid-1941 to mid-1944), and the cuff ring of her appointment as leader of a Zug or platoon. The auxiliary in the right foreground sports the trade badge of aircraft reporting personnel above the single chevron of Helferin. For all these insignia, see Plate H. (Courtesy Brian L.Davis)

G1: Helferin, SS-Helferinnen; Reichsschule Oberrenheim, 1943

The service dress of the SS Female Auxiliaries was this field-grey wool suit with single-breasted jacket; apart from the shade and the silver-grey collar piping it was similar to that worn in the second half of the war by the auxiliaries of the armed forces. It was worn with a black field cap of unique design, bearing the silver-grey SS style national emblem. This was repeated on the upper left sleeve; and on the left breast pocket all personnel wore an oval patch bearing the SS runes. Photographs show that the regulation Waffen-SS qualified signaller's arm patch was also often worn, in this case just above the *'Reichsschule-SS'* cuffband of the training establishment.

G2: Zollhelferin, Zollgrenschutz; Western Europe, c.1943

One of the smallest auxiliary branches was that of the Zollgrenschutz or customs border protection service. The grey wool suit is of the standard design used by female auxiliaries. The cuffband is as worn by male personnel, woven in aluminium thread on a green band; the collar patches are plain green apart from serrated aluminium thread inner edging. The field cap, unusually, displays both the Zoll pattern national emblem and the cockade in national colours.

G3: Polizeihelferin, c.1943

In many cases women auxiliaries were issued the equivalent male uniform items, or had no service uniform at all, simply wearing overall type working dress. This Police auxiliary wears a light one-piece grey-green overall with pleated patch pockets on the breast. On the left upper arm is the standard wreathed Police sleeve eagle in emerald green on a field-grey patch. The field cap has Police green piping and bears the regulation Police eagle in silver-grey on the front of the flap. The standard grey wool female auxiliary suit is also known to have been worn by some Polizeihelferinnen.

H: Female Auxiliaries' Insignia & Awards

H1–H9: The final November 1944 regulation rank insignia, to be worn by women auxiliaries from all branches of the Armed Forces: (1) Oberhelferin, (2) Haupthelferin, (3) Truppführerin, (4) Obertruppführerin, (5) Dienstführerin, (6) Oberdienstführerin, (7) Hauptdienstführerin, (8) Stabsführerin, (9) Oberstabsführerin.

H10–H14: Luftwaffe Auxiliary rank insignia worn from August 1940 to July 1941: (10) Helferin, (11) Oberhelferin, (12) Haupthelferin, (13) Führerin, (14) Oberführerin.

H15–H21: Luftwaffe Auxiliary rank insignia worn from July 1941 to June 1944: (15) Helferin, (16) Oberhelferin, (17) Haupthelferin, (18) Führerin, (19) Oberführerin, (20) Hauptführerin, (21) Stabsführerin.

H22: Gausieger Badge for regional winners in the National Trades Competition.

H23: Dienstnadel für deutsche Eisenbahnerrinen. This rare award was presented in Bronze, Silver and Gold grades.

H24: The badge worn by members of the RADwJ on War Service.

H25–H27: RAD women's rank brooches for members up to the age of 21: (25) Jungführerin with smooth border, (26) Maidenführerin with 'ribbed' border, (27) Stabshauptführerin with 'roped' border.

H28: RADwJ membership brooch.

H29: RADwJ brooch for members between the ages of 21 and 35, silver class.

H30: Right sleeve patch for Luftwaffe Flakhelferinnen.

H31: Right sleeve patch for Luftwaffe Stabshelferinnen.

H32: Brooch for Marinehelferinnen.

H33: Brooch for Nachrichtenhelferinen des Heeres.

H34: Luftwaffe Zivilabzeichen.

H35: Cross for 10 Years' Service as Nursing Sister.

H36–H44: Luftwaffe trade patches as worn by qualified Luftnachrichtenhelferinnen: (36) radio operator, (37) teletype operator, (38) telephone operator, (39) aircraft reporting staff, (40) signals administrator, (41) signals personnel, (42) direction finder operator, (43) sound location operator, (44) searchlight operator.

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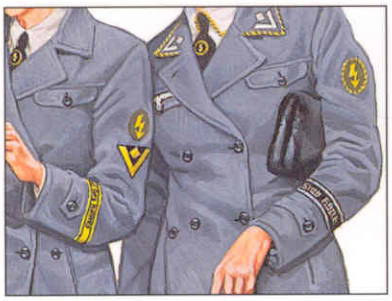

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Photographs

World War II German Women's Auxiliary Services

Under the Nazi regime, Hitler's conservative views on the place of housewives and mothers in society limited German women to a much less active role in the war than their British and Allied counterparts. Nevertheless, the demands of a prolonged war did see German women in a range of uniforms as auxiliaries with the Army, Navy, Air Force and SS, particularly in the signals and air defence services. This unique book explains and illustrates these organisations and their uniforms and insignia, as well as Red Cross nurses, and auxiliaries of the Labour Corps, Customs Service, National Socialist Women's Organisation, and League of German Maidens (Hitler Youth).

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